THE

ODYSSEY

OF

HOMER.

Tranſlated by

ALEXANDER POPE, Eſq;

VOLUME THE SECOND.

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THE ODYSSEY.

*BOOK IX.

THE ARGUMENT.

The adventures of the Cicons, Lotophagi, and Cyclops.

Ulyſſes begins the relation of his adventures; how after the deſtruction of Troy, he with his companions made an incurſion on the Cicons, by whom they were repulſed; and meeting with a ſtorm, were driven to the coaſt of the Lotophagi. From thence they ſailed to the land of the Cyclops, whoſe manners and ſituation are particularly characteriſed. The giant Polyphemus and his cave deſcribed; the uſage Ulyſſes and his companions met with there; and laſtly, the method and artifice by which he eſcaped.

THEN thus Ulyſſes. Thou, whom firſt in ſway,
As firſt in virtue, theſe thy realms obey;
How ſweet the products of a peaceful reign!
The heav'n-taught poet, and enchanting ſtrain;

* As we are now come to the epiſodical part of the Odyſſey, it may be thought neceſſary to ſpeak ſomething of the nature of epiſodes.

As the action of the epic is always one, entire, and great action; ſo the moſt trivial epiſodes muſt be ſo interwoven with it, as to be neceſſary parts, or convenient, as Mr. Dryden obſerves, to carry on the main deſign; either ſo neceſſary, as without them the poem muſt be imperfect, or ſo convenient, that no others can be imagined more ſuitable to the place in which they ſtand: there is nothing to be left void in a firm building, even the cavities ought not to be filled up with rubbiſh deſtructive to the ſtrength of it, but with materials of the ſame kind, though of leſs pieces, and fitted to the main fabric.

The well-fill'd palace, the perpetual feaſt,
A land rejoicing, and a people bleſt!

Ariſtotle tells us, that what is comprehended in the firſt platform of the fable is proper, the reſt is epiſode: let us examine the Odyſſey by this rule: the ground-work of the poem is, a prince abſent from his country ſeveral years, Neptune hinders his return, yet at laſt he breaks through all obſtacles, and returns, where he finds great diſorders, the authors of which he puniſhes, and reſtores peace to his kingdoms. This is all that is eſſential to the model; this the poet is not at liberty to change; this is ſo neceſſary, that any alteration deſtroys the deſign, ſpoils the fable, and makes another poem of it. But epiſodes are changeable; for inſtance, though it was neceſſary that Ulyſſes being abſent ſhould ſpend ſeveral years with foreign princes, yet it was not neceſſary that one of theſe princes ſhould be Antiphates, another Alcinous, or that Circe or Calypſo ſhould be the perſons who entertained him: it was in the poet's choice to have changed theſe perſons and ſtates, without changing his deſign or fable. Thus though theſe adventures or epiſodes become parts of the ſubject after they are choſen, yet they are not originally eſſential to the ſubject. But in what ſenſe then are they neceſſary? The reply is, Since the abſence of Ulyſſes was abſolutely neceſſary, it follows that not being at home, he muſt be in ſome other country; and therefore though the poet was at liberty to make uſe of none of theſe particular adventures, yet it was not in his choice to make uſe of none at all; if theſe had been omitted, he muſt have ſubſtituted others, or elſe he would have omitted part of the matter contained in his model, viz. the adventures of a perſon long abſent from his country; and the poem would have been defective. So that epiſodes are not actions, but parts of an action. It is in poetry, as Ariſtotle obſerves, as in painting; a painter puts many actions into one piece, but they all conſpire to form one entire and perfect action: a poet likewiſe uſes many epiſodes, but all thoſe epiſodes taken ſeparately finiſh nothing, they are but imperfect members, which altogether make one and the ſame action, like the parts of a human body, they all conſpire to conſtitute the whole man.

In a word, the epiſodes of Homer are complete epiſodes; they are proper to the ſubject, becauſe they are drawn from the ground of the fable; they are ſo joined to the principal action, that one is the neceſſary conſequence of the other, either truly or probably: and laſtly, they are imperfect members which do not make a complete and finiſhed body; for an epiſode that makes a complete action, cannot be part of a principal action; as is eſſential to all epiſodes.

An epiſode may then be defined, "A neceſſary part of an action, "extended by probable circumſtances." They are part of an action, for they are not added to the principal action, but only dilate and

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How goodly ſeems it, ever to employ
Man's ſocial days in union and in joy;

amplify that principal action: thus the poet to ſhew the ſufferings of Ulyſſes brings in the ſeveral epiſodes of Polyphemus, Scylla, the Syrens, &c. But why ſhou'd the words, "extended by probable "circumſtances," enter the definition? Becauſe the ſufferings of Ulyſſes are propoſed in the model of the fable in general only, but by relating the circumſtances, the manner how he ſuffered is diſcovered; and this connects it with the principal action, and ſhews very evidently the neceſſary relation the epiſode bears to the main deſign of the Odyſſey. What I have ſaid, I hope, plainly diſcovers the difference between the epiſodic and principal action, as well as the nature of epiſodes. See Boſſu more largely upon this ſubject.

v. 3. *How ſweet the products of a peaceful reign*, &c.] This paſſage has given great joy to the critics, as it has afforded them the ill-natured pleaſure of railing, and the ſatisfaction of believing they have found a fault in a good writer. It is fitter, ſay they, for the mouth of Epicurus than for the ſage Ulyſſes, to extol the pleaſures of feaſting and drinking in this manner: he whom the poet propoſes as the ſtandard of human wiſdom, ſays Rapin, ſuffers himſelf to be made drunk by the Phæacians. But it may rather be imagined, that the critic was not very ſober when he made the reflection; for there is not the leaſt appearance of a reaſon for that imputation. Plato indeed in his third book de Repub. writes, that what Ulyſſes here ſpeaks is no very proper example of temperance; but every body knows that Plato with reſpect to Homer, wrote with great partiality. Athenæus in his twelfth book gives us the following interpretation. Ulyſſes accommodates his diſcourſe to the preſent occaſion; he in appearance approves of the voluptuous lives of the Phæacians, and having heard Alcinous before ſay, that feaſting and ſinging, &c. was their ſupreme delight; he by a ſeaſonable flattery ſeems to comply with their inclinations; it being the moſt proper method to attain his deſires of being conveyed to his own country. He compares Ulyſſes to the Polypus, which is fabled to aſſume the colour of every rock to which he approaches: thus Sophocles,

Νόει πρὸς ἀνδρὶ σῶμα Πηλύπου, ὅπως
Πέτρᾳ τραπέσθαι γνησίᾳ φρονήματι.

That is, "In your acceſſes to mankind obſerve the Polypus, and "adapt yourſelf to the humour of the perſon to whom you apply." Euſtathius obſerves that this paſſage has been condemned, but he defends it after the very ſame way with Athenæus.

It is not impoſſible but that there may be ſome compliance with the nature and manners of the Phæacians, eſpecially becauſe Ulyſſes is always deſcribed as an artful man, not without ſome mixture of

The plenteous board high-heap'd with cates divine,
And o'er the foaming bowl the laughing wine!
  Amid theſe joys, why ſeeks thy mind to know
Th' unhappy ſeries of a wand'rer's woe;
Remembrance ſad, whoſe image to review,
Alas! muſt open all my wounds anew?
And oh, what firſt, what laſt ſhall I relate,
Of woes unnumber'd ſent by heav'n and fate?
  Know firſt the man (tho' now a wretch diſtreſt)
Who hopes thee, monarch, for his future gueſt.

diſſimulation: but it is no difficult matter to take the paſſage literally, and give it an irreproachable ſenſe. Ulyſſes had gone through innumerable calamities, he had lived to ſee a great part of Europe and Aſia laid deſolate by a bloody war; and after ſo many troubles, he arrives among a nation that was unacquainted with all the miſeries of war, where all the people were happy, and paſſed their lives with eaſe and pleaſures: this calm life fills him with admiration, and he artfully praiſes what he found praiſe-worthy in it; namely, the entertainments and muſic, and paſſes over the gallantries of the people, as Dacier obſerves, without any mention. Maximus Tyrius fully vindicates Homer. It is my opinion, ſays that author, that the poet, by repreſenting theſe gueſts in the midſt of their entertainments, delighted with the ſong and muſic, intended to recommend a more noble pleaſure than eating and drinking, ſuch a pleaſure as a wiſe man may imitate, by approving the better part, and rejecting the worſe, and chuſing to pleaſe the ear rather than the belly. 12 Differt.

If we underſtand the paſſage otherwiſe, the meaning may be this; I am perſuaded, ſays Ulyſſes, that the moſt agreeable end which a king can propoſe, is to ſee a whole nation in univerſal joy, when muſic and feaſting are in every houſe, when plenty is on every table, and wines to entertain every gueſt: this to me appears a ſtate of the greateſt felicity.

In this ſenſe Ulyſſes pays Alcinous a very agreeable compliment; as it is certainly the moſt glorious aim of a king to make his ſubjects happy, and diffuſe an univerſal joy through his dominions: he muſt be a rigid cenſor indeed who blames ſuch pleaſures as theſe, which have nothing contrary in them to virtue and ſtrict morality; eſpecially as they here bear a beautiful oppoſition to all the horrours which Ulyſſes had ſeen in the wars of Troy, and ſhew Phæacia as happy as Troy was miſerable. I will only add, that this agrees with the oriental way of ſpeaking; and in the poetical parts of the ſcriptures, the voice of melody, feaſting and dancing, are uſed to expreſs the happineſs of a nation.

Behold Ulyſſes! no ignoble name,
Earth ſounds my wiſdom, and high heav'n my fame. 20

v. 19. *Behold Ulyſſes!*———] The poet begins with declaring the name of Ulyſſes: the Phæacians had already been acquainted with it by the ſong of Demodocus, and therefore it could not fail of raiſing the utmoſt attention and curioſity (as Euſtathius obſerves) of the whole aſſembly, to hear the ſtory of ſo great a hero. Perhaps it may be thought that Ulyſſes is oſtentatious, and ſpeaks of himſelf too favourably; but the neceſſity of it will appear, if we conſider that Ulyſſes had nothing but his perſonal qualifications to engage the Phæacians in his favour. It was therefore requiſite to make thoſe qualifications known, and this was not poſſible to be done but by his own relation, he being a ſtranger among ſtrangers. Beſides, he ſpeaks before a vain-glorious people, who thought even boaſting no fault. It may be queſtioned whether Virgil be ſo happy in thoſe reſpects, when he puts almoſt the ſame words into the mouth of Æneas;

" Sum pius Æneas, raptos qui ex hoſte penates
" Claſſe veho mecum, famâ ſuper æthera notus:"

For his boaſt contributes nothing to the re-eſtabliſhment of his affairs, for he ſpeaks to the goddeſs Venus. Yet Scaliger infinitely prefers Virgil before Homer, though there be no other difference in the words, than " raptos qui ex hoſte penates," inſtead of

——— Ὃς πᾶσι δόλοισιν
Ἀνθρώποισι μέλω. ———

He queſtions whether ſubtilties, or δόλοι, ever raiſed any perſon's glory to the heavens; whereas that is the reward of piety. But the word is to be underſtood to imply wiſdom, and all the ſtratagems of war, &c. according to the firſt verſe of the Odyſſey.

The man for wiſdom's various arts renown'd.

He is not leſs ſevere upon the verſes immediately preceding.

Σοὶ δ' ἐμὰ κήδεα θυμὸς ἐπείρατο γοώεντα, &c.

which lines are undoubtedly very beautiful, and admirably expreſs the number of the ſufferings of Ulyſſes; the multitude of them is ſo great, that they almoſt confound him; and he ſeems at a loſs where to begin, how to proceed, or where to end; and they agree very well with the propoſition in the opening of the Odyſſey, which was to relate the ſufferings of a brave man. Theſe verſes which Scaliger quotes are

" Infandum regina jubes renovare dolorem;
" Trojanas ut opes, &c."

" Omnia ſanè non ſine ſuâ divinitate;" and he concludes, that Virgil has not ſo much imitated Homer, as taught us how Homer ought to have wrote.

My native ſoil is Ithaca the fair,
Where high Neritus waves his woods in air:
Dulichium, Samè, and Zacynthus crown'd
With ſhady mountains, ſpread their iſles around.
(Theſe to the north and night's dark regions run,
Thoſe to Aurora and the riſing ſun.)
Low lies our iſle, yet bleſt in fruitful ſtores;
Strong are her ſons, tho' rocky are her ſhores;
And none, ah none ſo lovely to my ſight,
Of all the lands that heav'n o'erſpreads with light!
In vain Calypſo long conſtrain'd my ſtay,
With ſweet, reluctant, amorous delay;

v. 21. —— —— *Ithaca the fair,*
Where high Neritus, &c.]

Euſtathius gives various interpretations of this poſition of Ithaca; ſome underſtand it to ſignify that it lies low; others explain it to ſignify that it is of low poſition, but high with reſpect to the neighbouring iſlands; others take παντυπερτάτη (excellentiſſima) in another ſenſe to imply the excellence of the country, which though it lies low, is productive of brave inhabitants, for Homer immediately adds ἀγαθὴ κυρεῖροφος. Strabo gives a different expoſition; Ithaca is χθαμαλὴ, as it lies near to the continent, and παντυπερτάτη, as it is the utmoſt of all the iſlands towards the north, πρὸς ἀρκτον, for thus πρὸς ζόφον is to be underſtood. So that Ithaca, adds he, is not of a low ſituation, but as it lies oppoſed to the continent, not the moſt lofty (ὑψηλοτάτη) but the moſt extreme of the northern iſlands; for ſo παντυπερτάτη ſignifies. Dacier differs from Strabo in the explication of πρὸς ἠῶ τ' ἠέλιόν τε, which he believes to mean the ſouth; ſhe applies the words to the eaſt, or ſouth eaſt, and appeals to the maps which ſo deſcribe it. It is the moſt northern of the iſlands, and joins to the continent of Epirus; it has Dulichium on the eaſt, and on the ſouth Samos and Zacynthus.

v. 31. *In vain Calypſo* ——] Euſtathius obſerves, that Ulyſſes repeats his refuſal of the goddeſs Calypſo and Circe in the ſame words, to ſhew Alcinous, by a ſecret denial, that he could not be induced to ſtay from his country, or marry his daughter: he calls Circe δολόεσσα, becauſe ſhe is ſkilled in magical incantations: he deſcribes Ithaca with all its inconveniencies, to convince Alcinous of his veracity, and that he will not deceive him in other circumſtances, when he gives ſo diſadvantageous a character of a country for which he expreſſes ſo great a fondneſs; and laſtly, in relating the death of his friends, he ſeems to be guilty of a tautology, in δάκρυόν τε μόθον τε. But Aulus Gellius gives us the reaſon of it,

With all her charms as vainly Circe ſtrove,
And added magic, to ſecure my love.
In pomps or joys, the palace or the grot,
My country's image never was forgot,
My abſent parents roſe before my ſight,
And diſtant lay contentment and delight.

Hear then the woes, which mighty Jove ordain'd
To wait my paſſage from the Trojan land,
The winds from Ilion to the Cicons' ſhore,
Beneath cold Iſmarus, our veſſels bore.
We boldly landed on the hoſtile place,
And ſack'd the city, and deſtroy'd the race,

" Atrocitatem rei bis idem dicendo auxit, inculcavitque, non igitur " illa ejudem ſignificationis repetitio, ignava & frigida videri " debet."

v. 41. ——— *to the Cicons' ſhore*] Here is the natural and true beginning of the Odyſſey, which comprehends all the ſufferings of Uyſſes, and theſe ſufferings take their date immediately after his leaving the ſhores of Troy; from that moment he endeavours to return to his own country, and all the difficulties he meets with in returning, enter into the ſubject of the poem. But it may then be aſked, if the Odyſſey does not take up the ſpace of ten years, ſince Ulyſſes waſtes ſo many in his return; and is not this contrary to the nature of epic poetry, which it is agreed muſt not at the longeſt exceed the duration of one year, or rather campaign? The anſwer is, the poet lets all the time paſs which exceeds the bounds of epic action, before he opens the poem; thus Ulyſſes ſpends ſome time before he arrives at the iſland of Circe, with her he continues one year, and ſeven with Calypſo; he begins artificially at the concluſion of the action, and finds an opportunity to repeat the moſt conſiderable and neceſſary incidents which preceded the opening of the Odyſſey; by this method he reduces the duration of it into leſs compaſs than the ſpace of two months. This conduct is abſolutely neceſſary, for from the time that the poet introduces his hero upon the ſtage, he ought to continue his action to the very end of it, that he may never afterwards appear idle or out of motion: this is verified in Ulyſſes; from the moment he leaves the iſland of Ogygia to the death of the ſuitors, he is never out of view, never idle; he is always either in action, or preparing for it, till he is re-eſtabliſhed in his dominions. If the poet had followed the natural order of the action, he, like Lucan, would not have wrote an epic poem, but an hiſtory in verſe.

v. 44. *And ſack'd the city* ———] The poet aſſigns no reaſon why Ulyſſes deſtroys this city of the Ciconians, but we may

Their wives made captive, their poſſeſſions ſhar'd,
And ev'ry ſoldier found a like reward,
I then advis'd to fly; not ſo the reſt,
Who ſtaid to revel, and prolong the feaſt:
The fatted ſheep and ſable bulls they ſlay,
And bowls fly round, and riot waſtes the day.
Meantime the Cicons, to their holds retir'd,
Call on the Cicons, with new fury fir'd;
With early morn the gather'd country ſwarms,
And all the continent is bright with arms,
Thick as the budding leaves or riſing flow'rs
O'erſpread the land, when ſpring deſcends in ſhow'rs:
All expert ſoldiers, ſkill'd on foot to dare,
Or from the bounding courſer urge the war.
Now fortune changes (ſo the fates ordain)
Our hour was come to taſte our ſhare of pain.
Cloſe at the ſhips the bloody fight began,
Wounded they wound, and man expires on man.
Long as the morning ſun increaſing bright
O'er heav'n's pure azure ſpread the growing light,
Promiſcuous death the form of war confounds,
Each adverſe battle gor'd with equal wounds:
But when his ev'ning wheels o'erhung the main,
Then conqueſt crown'd the fierce Ciconian train.
Six brave companions from each ſhip we loſt,
The reſt eſcape in haſte, and quit the coaſt.

learn from the Iliad that they were auxiliaries of Troy, book the ſecond.

With great Euphemus the Ciconians move,
Sprung from Trœzenian Cœus, lov'd of Jove.

And therefore Ulyſſes aſſaults them as enemies. Euſtathius.

v. 69. *Six brave companions from each ſhip we loſt.*] This is one of the paſſages which fell under the cenſure of Zoilus; it is very improbable, ſays that critic, that each veſſel ſhould loſe ſix men exactly; this ſeems a too equal diſtribution to be true, conſidering the chance of battle. But it has been anſwered, that Ulyſſes had twelve veſſels, and that in this engagement he loſt ſeventy-

With ſails outſpread we fly th' unequal ſtrife,
Sad for their loſs, but joyful of our life.
Yet as we fled, our fellows rites we pay'd,
And thrice we call'd on each unhappy ſhade.
Meanwhile the god, whoſe hand the thunder forms,
Drives clouds on clouds, and blackens heav'n with ſtorms.
Wide o'er the waſte the rage of Boreas ſweeps,
And night ruſh'd headlong on the ſhaded deeps.
Now here, now there, the giddy ſhips are borne,
And all the rattling ſhrouds in fragments torn.
We furl'd the ſail, we ply'd the lab'ring oar,
Took down our maſts, and row'd our ſhips to ſhore.

two ſoldiers; ſo that the meaning is, that taking the total of his loſs, and dividing it equally through the whole fleet, he found it amounted exactly to ſix men in every veſſel. This will appear to be a true ſolution, if we remember that there was a neceſſity to ſupply the loſs of any one ſhip out of the others that had ſuffered leſs: ſo that though one veſſel loſt more than the reſt, yet being recruited equally from the reſt of the fleet, there would be exactly ſix men wanting in every veſſel. Euſtathius.

v. 74. *And thrice we call'd on each unhappy ſhade.*] This paſſage preſerves a piece of antiquity, it was the cuſtom of the Grecians, when their friends died upon foreign ſhores, to uſe this ceremony of recalling their ſouls, though they obtained not their bodies, believing by this method that they tranſported them to their own country: Pindar mentions the ſame practice,

Κέλεῖαι γὰς ἐὰν
Ψυχὰν νόμιζαι φρίξῳ, &c.

That is, "Phrixus commands thee to call his ſoul into his own "country." Thus the Athenians, when they loſt any men at ſea, went to the ſhores, and calling thrice on their names, raiſed a cenotaph or empty monument to their memories; by performing which ſolemnity, they invited the ſhades of the departed to return, and performed all rites as if the bodies of the dead had really been buried by them in their ſepulchres. Euſtathius.

The Romans as well as the Greeks followed the ſame cuſtom: thus Virgil,

"——— Et magnâ manes ter voce vocavi."

The occaſion of this practice aroſe from the opinion, that the ſouls of the departed were not admitted into the ſtate of the happy, without the performance of the ſepulchral ſolemnities.

Two tedious days and two long nights we lay,
O'erwatched and batter'd in the naked bay.
But the third morning when Aurora brings,
We rear the maſts, we ſpread the canvas wings;
Refreſh'd and careleſs on the deck reclin'd,
We ſit, and truſt the pilot and the wind.
Then to my native country had I ſail'd:
But the cape doubled, adverſe winds prevail'd.
Strong was the tide, which by the northern blaſt
Impell'd our veſſels on Cythera caſt.
Nine days our fleet th' uncertain tempeſt bore
Far in wide ocean, and from ſight of ſhore:
The tenth we touch'd by various errours toſt,
The land of Lotos and the flow'ry coaſt.

v. 97. *The tenth we touch'd——*
The land of Lotos——]

This paſſage has given occaſion for much controverſy; for ſince the Lotophagi in reality are diſtant from the Malean cape twenty-two thouſand five hundred ſtades, Ulyſſes muſt ſail above two thouſand every day, if in nine days he ſailed to the Lotophagi. This objection would be unanſwerable, if we place that nation in the Atlantic ocean; but Dacier obſerves from Strabo, that Polybius examined this point, and thus gives us the reſult of it. This great hiſtorian maintains, that Homer has not placed the Lotophagi in the Atlantic ocean, as he does the iſlands of Circe and Calypſo, becauſe it was improbable that in the compaſs of ten days the moſt favourable winds could have carried Ulyſſes from the Malean cape into that ocean; it therefore follows, that the poet has given us the true ſituation of this nation, conformable to geography, and placed it as it really lies, in the Mediterranean; now in ten days a good wind will carry a veſſel from Malea into the Mediterranean, as Homer relates.

This is an inſtance that Homer ſometimes follows truth without fiction, at other times diſguiſes it. But I confeſs I think Homer's poetry would have been as beautiful if he had deſcribed all his iſlands in their true poſitions: his inconſtancy in this point, may ſeem to introduce confuſion and ambiguity, when the truth would have been more clear, and as beautiful in his poetry.

Nothing can better ſhew the great deference which former ages paid Homer, than theſe defences of the learned ancients; they continually aſcribe his deviations from truth, (as in the inſtance before us) to deſign, not to ignorance; to his art as a poet, and not

We climb'd the beach, and ſprings of water found,
Then ſpread our haſty banquet on the ground.
Three men were ſent, deputed from the crew,
(An herald one) the dubious coaſt to view,
And learn what habitants poſſeſt the place.
They went, and found an hoſpitable race;
Not prone to ill, nor ſtrange to foreign gueſt,
They eat, they drink, and nature gives the feaſt;
The trees around them, all their fruit produce;
Lotos, the name; divine, nectarious juice!

to want of ſkill as a geographer. In a writer of leſs fame, ſuch relations might be thought errours. But in Homer they are either underſtood to be no errours, or if errours, they are vindicated by the greateſt names of antiquity.

Euſtathius adds, that the ancients diſagree about this iſland: ſome place it about Cyrene, from Mauruſia of the African Moors: it is alſo named Meninx, and lies upon the African coaſt, near the leſſer Syrte. It is about three hundred and fifty ſtades in length, and ſomewhat leſs in breadth: it is alſo named Lotophagitis from Lotos.

v. 100. *An herald one.*] The reaſon why the poet mentions the herald in particular, is becauſe his office was ſacred; and by the common law of nations his perſon inviolable: Ulyſſes therefore joins an herald in this commiſſion, for the greater ſecurity of thoſe whom he ſends to ſearch the country. Euſtathius.

v. 106. *Lotos.*] Euſtathius aſſures us, that there are various kinds of it. It has been a queſtion whether it is an herb, a root, or a tree: he is of opinion, that Homer ſpeaks of it as an herb; for he calls it ἄνθινον εἶδας, and that the word ἐξέπλεσθαι is in its proper ſenſe applied to the grazing of beaſts, and therefore he judges it not to be a tree, or root. He adds, there is an Ægyptian Lotos, which, as Herodotus affirms, grows in great abundance along the Nile in the time of its inundations; it reſembles (ſays that hiſtorian in his Euterpe) a lily; the Ægyptians dry it in the ſun, then take the pulp out of it, which grows like the head of a poppy, and bake it as bread; this kind of it agrees likewiſe with the Ἄνθινον εἶδας of Homer. Athenæus writes of the Lybian Lotos in the fourteenth book of his Deipnoſophiſt; he quotes the words of Polybius in the twelfth book of his hiſtory, now not extant; that hiſtorian ſpeaks of it as an eye-witneſs, having examined the nature of it. "The Lotos is a tree of no great height, rough and "thorny: it bears a green leaf, ſomewhat thicker and broader "than that of the bramble or briar; its fruit at firſt is like the "ripe berries of the myrtle, both in ſize and colour, but when it "ripens it turns to purple; it is then about the bigneſs of an olive;

Thence call'd Lotophagi) which whoſo taſtes,
Inſatiate riots in the ſweet repaſts,
Nor other home nor other care intends,
But quits his houſe, his country, and his friends:
The three we ſent, from off th' inchanting ground
We dragg'd reluctant, and by force we bound:
The reſt in haſte forſook the pleaſing ſhore,
Or, the charm taſted, had return'd no more.
Now plac'd in order on their banks they ſweep
The ſea's ſmooth face, and cleave the hoary deep;
With heavy hearts we labour thro' the tide,
To coaſts unknown, and oceans yet untry'd.
The land of Cyclops firſt; a ſavage kind,
Not tam'd by manners, nor by laws confin'd:

" it is round, and contains a very ſmall kernel; when it is ripe " they gather it, and bruiſing it among bread-corn, they put it up " into a veſſel, and keep it as food for their ſlaves; they dreſs it " after the ſame manner for their other domeſtics, but firſt take " out the kernel from it: it has the taſte of a fig, or dates, but " is of a far better ſmell: they likewiſe make a wine of it, by " ſteeping and bruiſing it in water; it has a very agreeable taſte " like wine tempered with honey. They drink it without mix- " ing it with water, but it will not keep above ten days, they " therefore make it only in ſmall quantities for immediate uſe." Perhaps it was this laſt kind of Lotos, which the companions of Ulyſſes taſted; and if it was thus prepared, it gives a reaſon why they were overcome with it; for being a wine, it had the power of intoxication.

v. 114. *The charm once taſted, had return'd no more.*] It muſt be confeſſed, that the effects of this Lotos are extraordinary, and ſeem fabulous; how then ſhall we reconcile the relation to credibility? the foundation of it might perhaps be no more than this: the companions of Ulyſſes might be willing to ſettle amongſt theſe Lotophagi, being won by the pleaſure of the place, and tired with a life of danger and the perils of ſeas. Or perhaps it is only an allegory to teach us that thoſe who indulge themſelves in pleaſures, are with difficulty withdrawn from them, and want an Ulyſſes to lead them by a kind of violence into the paths of glory.

v. 119. *The land of Cyclops firſt*] Homer here confines himſelf to the true geography of Sicily: for, in reality, a ſhip may eaſily ſail in one day from the Land of the Lotophagi to Sicily: theſe Cyclops inhabited the weſtern part of that iſland, about Drepane and Lilybæum. Bochart ſhews us, that they derive their name from

Untaught to plant, to turn the glebe and ſow;
They all their products to free nature owe.

the place of their inhabitation; for the Phæacians call them Chek-lub, by contraction for Chek-lelub; that is, the gulf of Lilybæum, or the men who dwell about the Lilybæan gulf. The Greeks (who underſtood not the Phæacian language) formed the word Cyclop, from Chek-lub, from the affinity of ſound; which word in the Greek language, ſignifying a circular eye, might give occaſion to fable that they had but one large round eye in the middle of their foreheads. Dacier.

Euſtathius tells us, that the eye of Cyclops is an allegory, to repreſent that in anger, or any other violent paſſion, men ſee but one ſingle object, as that paſſion directs, or ſee but with one eye; εἰς ἕν τι, καὶ μόνον ἐφορᾷ: and that paſſion transforms us into a kind of ſavages, and makes us brutal and ſanguinary, like this Polypheme; and he that by reaſon extinguiſhes ſuch a paſſion, may like Ulyſſes be ſaid to put out that eye that made him ſee but one ſingle object.

I have already given another reaſon of this fiction; namely their wearing a head-piece, or martial vizor, that had but one ſight through it. The vulgar form their judgments from appearances; and a mariner, who paſſed theſe coaſts at a diſtance, obſerving the reſemblance of a broad eye in the forehead of one of theſe Cyclops, might relate it accordingly, and impoſe it as a truth upon the credulity of the ignorant: it is notorious that things equally monſtrous have found belief in all ages.

But it may be aſked if there were any ſuch perſons who bore the name of Cyclops? No leſs an hiſtorian than Thucydides informs us, that Sicily was at firſt poſſeſſed and inhabited by giants, by the Læſtrigons and Cyclops, a barbarous and inhuman people: but he adds, that theſe ſavages dwelt only in one part of that iſland.

Cedrenus gives us an exact deſcription of the Cyclops: Ἐκεῖθεν Ὀδυσσεὺς ἐμπίπλει Κύκλωπι ἐν Σικελίᾳ ἔχ ἑὶ ὀφθαλμῷ, &c. "Ulyſſes fell among the Cyclops in Sicily; a people not one-ey'd, according to the mythologiſts, but men like other men, only of a more gigantic ſtature, and of a barbarous and ſavage temper." From this deſcription, we may ſee what Homer writes as a poet, and what as an hiſtorian; he paints theſe people in general agreeably to their perſons, only diſguiſes ſome features, to give an ornament to his relation, and to introduce the marvellous, which demands a place chiefly in epic poetry.

What Homer ſpeaks of the fertility of Sicily, is agreeable to hiſtory: it was called anciently "Romani imperii horreum." Pliny lib. x. cap. 10. writes, that the Leontine plains bear for every grain of corn, an hundred. Diodorus Siculus relates in his hiſtory what Homer ſpeaks in poetry, that the fields of Leontium yield wheat without the culture of the huſbandman: he was an eye-witneſs, being a native of the iſland. From hence in general it may be ob-

The ſoil untill'd a ready harveſt yields,
With wheat and barley wave the golden fields,
Spontaneous wines from weighty cluſters pour,
And Jove deſcends in each prolific ſhow'r.
By theſe no ſtatutes and no rights are known,
No council held, no monarch fills the throne,

ſerved, that wherever we can trace Homer, we find, if not hiſtoric truth, yet the reſemblance of it; that is, a plain truth as can be related without converting his poem into an hiſtory.

v. 127. *By theſe no ſtatutes and no rights are known,*
No council held, no monarch fills the throne.]

Plato (obſerves Spondanus) in his third book of laws, treats of government as practiſed in the firſt ages of the world; and refers to this paſſage of Homer; mankind was originally independant, every "maſter of a family was a kind of king of his family, and "reigned over his wife and children like the Cyclopeans," according to the expreſſion of Homer,

Τοῖσιν δ' ὅτ' ἀγοραὶ βουληφόροι, ὅτε θέμιστες.

Ariſtotle likewiſe complains, that even in his times, in many places, men lived without laws according to their own fancies, ζῇ ἕκαστος ὡς βούλεται, κυκλωπικὴς θεμιστεύων παίδων, ἃ ἀλόχῳ, referring likewiſe to this paſſage of Homer.

Dacier adds from Plato, that after the deluge, three manners of life ſucceeded among mankind; the firſt was rude and ſavage; men were afraid of a ſecond flood; and therefore inhabited the ſummits of mountains, without any dependance upon one another, and each was abſolute in his own family: the ſecond was leſs brutal; as the fear of the deluge wore away by degrees, they deſcended towards the bottom of mountains, and began to have ſome intercourſe: the third was more poliſhed; when a full ſecurity from the apprehenſions of a flood was eſtabliſhed by time, they then began to inhabit the plains, and a more general commerce by degrees prevailing, they entered into ſocieties, and eſtabliſhed laws for the general good of the whole community. Theſe Cyclopeans maintained the firſt ſtate of life in the days of Ulyſſes; they had no intercourſe with other ſocieties, by reaſon of their barbarities, and conſequently their manners were not at all poliſhed by the general laws of humanity. This account agrees excellently with the holy ſcriptures, and perhaps Plato borrowed it from the writings of Moſes: after the deluge men retreated to the mountains for fear of a ſecond flood; the chief riches, like theſe Cyclopeans, conſiſted in flocks and herds; and every maſter of a family ruled his houſe without any controul or ſubordination.

But high on hills or airy cliffs they dwell,
Or deep in caves whoſe entrance leads to hell.
Each rules his race, his neighbour not his care,
Heedleſs of others, to his own ſevere.

Oppos'd to the Cyclopean coaſts, there lay
An iſle, whoſe hills their ſubject fields ſurvey;
Its name Lachæa, crown'd with many a grove,
Where ſavage goats thro' pathleſs thickets rove:
No needy mortals here, with hunger bold,
Or wretched hunters, thro' the wint'ry cold
Purſue their flight; but leave them ſafe to bound
From hill to hill, o'er all the deſert ground.
Nor knows the ſoil to feed the fleecy care,
Or feels the labours of the crooked ſhare;
But uninhabited, untill'd, unſown
It lies, and breeds the bleating goat alone.
For there no veſſel with vermilion prore,
Or bark of traffic, glides from ſhore to ſhore;
The rugged race of ſavages, unſkill'd
The ſeas to traverſe, or the ſhips to build,
Gaze on the coaſt, nor cultivate the ſoil;
Unlearn'd in all th' induſtrious arts of toil.

v. 129 *But high on hills —— or deep in caves.*] This is ſaid, to give an air of probability to the revenge which Ulyſſes takes upon this giant, and indeed to the whole ſtory. He deſcribes his ſolitary life, to ſhew that he was utterly deſtitute of aſſiſtance; and it is for the ſame reaſon, continues Euſtathius, that the poet relates that he left his fleet under a deſart neighbouring iſland, namely to make it probable, that the Cyclops could not ſeize it, or purſue Ulyſſes, having no ſhipping.

v. 134. *An iſle, whoſe hills*, &c.] This little iſle is now called Æguſa, which ſignifies the iſle of goats. Cluverius deſcribes it after the manner of Homer, "Prata mollia, & irrigua, ſolum fertile, portum commodum, fontes limpidos." It is not certain whether the poet gives any name to it; perhaps it had not received any in thoſe ages, it being without inhabitants; though ſome take λάχεια for a proper name, as is obſerved by Euſtathius.

v. 144. *Bleating goat.*] It is exactly thus in the original, verſe 124, μηκάδας, "balantes;" which Pollux, lib. v. obſerves not to be the proper term for the voice of goats, which is φθιμαϛμὸς.

Yet here all products and all plants abound,
Sprung from the fruitful genius of the ground;
Fields waving high with heavy crops are ſeen,
And vines that flouriſh in eternal green,
Refreſhing meads along the murm'ring main,
And fountains ſtreaming down the fruitful plain.
A port there is, inclos'd on either ſide,
Where ſhips may reſt, unanchor'd and unty'd;
'Till the glad mariners incline to ſail,
And the ſea whitens with the riſing gale.
High at its head, from out the cavern'd rock
In living rills a guſhing fountain broke:
Around it, and above, for ever green
The buſhing alders form'd a ſhady ſcene.
Hither ſome fav'ring god, beyond our thought,
Thro' all-ſurrounding ſhade our navy brought;
For gloomy night deſcended on the main,
Nor glimmer'd Phœbe in th' etherial plain:
But all unſeen the clouded iſland lay,
And all unſeen the ſurge and rolling ſea,
'Till ſafe we anchor'd in the ſhelter'd bay:
Our ſails we gather'd caſt our cables o'er,
And ſlept ſecure along the ſandy ſhore.
Soon as again the roſy morning ſhone,
Reveal'd the landſchape and the ſcene unknown,
With wonder ſeiz'd we view the pleaſing ground,
And walk delighted, and expatiate round.

v 165. *Hither ſome fav'ring god* ——] This circumſtance is inſerted with great judgment, Ulyſſes otherwiſe might have landed in Sicily, and fallen into the hands of the Cyclopeans, and conſequently been loſt inevitably: he therefore piouſly aſcribes his ſafety, by being driven upon this deſolate iſland, to the guidance of the gods; he uſes it as a retreat, leaves his navy there, and paſſes over into Sicily in one ſingle veſſel, undiſcovered by theſe gigantic ſavages; this reconciles the relation to probability, and renders his eſcape practicable. Euſtathius.

Rous'd by the woodland nymphs, at early dawn,
The mountain goats came bounding o'er the lawn:
In haſte our fellows to the ſhips repair,
For arms and weapons of the ſilvan war;
Straight in three ſquadrons all our crew we part,
And bend the bow, or wing the miſſile dart;
The bounteous gods afford a copious prey,
And nine fat goats each veſſel bears away:
The royal bark had ten. Our ſhips compleat
We thus ſupply'd, (for twelve were all the fleet).
Here, till the ſetting ſun roll'd down the light,
We ſat indulging in the genial rite:

v. 178. *The woodland nymphs.*] This paſſage is not without obſcurity, and it is not eaſy to underſtand what is meant by "the "daughters of Jupiter." Euſtathius tells us, the poet ſpeaks allegorically, and that he means to ſpecify the plants and herbs of the field. Jupiter denotes the air, not only in Homer, but in the Latin poets. Thus Virgil.

"Tum pater omnipotens fœcundis imbribus Æther
"Conjugis in gremium lætæ deſcendit ——"

and conſequently the herbs and plants, being nouriſhed by the mild air and fruitful rains, may be ſaid to be the daughters of Jupiter, or offſpring of the ſkies; and theſe goats and beaſts of the field, being fed by theſe plants and herbs, may be ſaid to be awakened by the daughters of Jupiter, that is, they awake to feed upon the herbage early in the morning. Κῶραι Διὸς, ἀλληγορικῶς αἱ τῶν φυτῶν αὐξητικαὶ δυνάμεις, ὅς ὁ ζεὺς ποιεῖ. Thus Homer makes deities of the vegetative faculties and virtues of the field. I fear ſuch boldneſſes would not be allowed in modern poetry.

It muſt be confeſſed that this interpretation is very refined: but I am ſure it will be a more natural explication to take theſe for the real mountain nymphs (Oreades) as they are in many places of the Odyſſey; the very expreſſion is found in the ſixth Book,

—— Νύμφαι κοῦραι Διὸς ——

and there ſignifies the nymphs attending upon Diana in her ſports: and immediately after Ulyſſes, being awakened by a ſudden noiſe, miſtakes Nauſicaa and her damſels for nymphs of the mountains or floods. This conjecture will not be without probability, if we remember that theſe nymphs were huntreſſes, as is evident from their relation to Dianna. Why then may not this other expreſſion be meant of the nymphs that are fabled to inhabit the mountains?

Nor wines were wanting; thoſe from ample jars
We drain'd the prize of our Ciconian wars.
The land of Cyclops lay in proſpect near;
The voice of goats and bleating flocks we hear,
And from their mountains riſing ſmokes appear.
Now ſunk the ſun, and darkneſs cover'd o'er
The face of things: along the ſea-beat ſhore
Satiate we ſlept: but when the ſacred dawn
Ariſing glitter'd o'er the dewy lawn,
I call'd my fellows, and theſe words addreſt.
My dear aſſociates, here indulge your reſt:
While, with my ſingle ſhip, advent'rous I
Go forth, the manners of yon men to try;
Whether a race unjuſt, of barb'rous might,
Rude, and unconſcious of a ſtranger's right;
Or ſuch who harbour pity in their breaſt,
Revere the gods, and ſuccour the diſtreſt?
This ſaid, I climb'd my veſſel's lofty ſide;
My train obey'd me and the ſhip unty'd.
In order ſeated on their banks, they ſweep
Neptune's ſmooth face, and cleave the yielding deep.
When to the neareſt verge of land we drew,
Faſt by the ſea a lonely cave we view,

v. 201. *While, with my ſingle ſhip, advent'rous I.*] The reader may be pleaſed to obſerve, that the poet has here given the reins to his fancy, and run out into a luxuriant deſcription of Æguſa and Sicily: he refreſhes the mind of the reader with a pleaſing and beautiful ſcene, before he enters upon a ſtory of ſo much horrour, as this of the Cyclops.

A very ſufficient reaſon may be aſſigned, why Ulyſſes here goes in perſon to ſearch this land: he dares not, as Euſtathius remarks, truſt his companions; their diſobedience among the Ciconians, and their unworthy conduct among the Lotophagi, have convinced him that no confidence is to be repoſed in them: this ſeems probable, and upon this probability Homer proceeds to bring about the puniſhment of Polypheme, which the wiſdom of Ulyſſes effects, and it is an action of importance, and conſequently ought to be performed by the hero of the poem.

High, and with dark'ning laurels cover'd o'er ;
Where ſheep and goats lay ſlumb'ring round the ſhore.
Near this, a fence of marble from the rock,
Brown with o'er-arching pine, and ſpreading oak.
A giant-ſhepherd here his flock maintains
Far from the reſt, and ſolitary reigns,
In ſhelter thick of horrid ſhade reclin'd ;
And gloomy miſchiefs labour in his mind.
A form enormous ! far unlike the race
Of human birth, in ſtature, or in face ;

v. 221. *A form enormous! far unlike the race of human birth*] Ceropius Becanus, an Antwerpian, has wrote a large diſcourſe to prove, that there never were any ſuch men as giants ; contrary to the teſtimony both of prophane and ſacred hiſtory: thus Moſes ſpeaks of the Rephaims of Aſteroth, the Zamzummims of Ham, the Emims of Moab, and Anakims of Hebron. See Deut. ii. ver. 20. "That "alſo was called a land of giants, it was a great people and tall as the Zamzummims." Thus Goliah muſt be allowed to be a giant, for he was ſix cubits and a ſpan, that is, nine feet and a ſpan in height; his coat of mail weighed five thouſand ſhekels of braſs, about one hundred and fifty pounds : (but I confeſs others underſtand the leſſer ſhekel) the head of his ſpear alone weighed ſix hundred ſhekels of iron, that is, about eighteen or nineteen pounds. We find the like relations in prophane hiſtory ; Plutarch in his life of Theſeus ſays, That age was productive of men of prodigious ſtature, giants. Thus Diodorus Siculus ; "Ægyptii ſcribunt, Inſidiis ætate, fuiſſe vaſto cor-"pore homines, quos Græci dixere gigantes." Herodotus affirms that the body of Oreſtes was dug up, and appeared to be ſeven cubits long ; but Aulus Gellius believes this to be an errour. Joſephus writes, l. xviii. c. 6. that Vitellius ſent a Jew named Eleazer, ſeven cubits in height, as a preſent from Artabanes king of the Parthians, to Tiberius Cæſar ; this man was ten feet and a half high. Pliny vii. 16. ſpeaks of a man that was nine feet nine inches high ; and in another place, vi. 30. "Sybortas, gentem Æthiopum Nomadum, "octona cubita longitudine excedere."

Thus it is evident, that there have been men of very extraordinary ſtature in former ages. Though perhaps ſuch inſtances were not frequent in any age or any nation So that Homer only amplifies, not invents ; and as there was really a people called Cyclopeans, ſo they might be men of great ſtature, or giants.

It may ſeem ſtrange that in all ancient ſtories the firſt planters of moſt nations are recorded to be giants ; I ſcarce can perſuade myſelf but ſuch accounts are generally fabulous ; and hope to be pardoned for a conjecture which may give a ſeeming reaſon how ſuch ſtories

As ſome lone mountain's monſtrous growth he ſtood,
Crown'd with rough thickets, and a nodding wood.
I left my veſſel at the point of land,
And cloſe to guard it, gave our crew command:
With only twelve the boldeſt and the beſt,
I ſeek th' adventure, and forſake the reſt.
Then took a goat-ſkin fill'd with precious wine,
The gift of Maron of Evantheus' line,
(The prieſt of Phœbus at th' Iſmarian ſhrine.)
In ſacred ſhade his honour'd manſion ſtood
Amidſt Apollo's conſecrated wood;
Him, and his houſe, heav'n mov'd my mind to ſave,
And coſtly preſents in return he gave;

came to prevail. The Greeks were a people of very great antiquity; they made many expeditions, as appears from Jaſon, &c. and ſent out frequent colonies: now the head of every collony was called Ἄναξ, and theſe adventurers being perſons of great figure in ſtory, were recorded as men of war, of might and renown, through the old world: it is therefore not impoſſible but the Hebrews might form their word Anac, from the Greek ἄναξ, and uſe it to denote perſons of uncommon might and abilities. Theſe they called Anac, and ſons of Anac; and afterwards in a leſs proper ſenſe uſed it to ſignify men of uncommon ſtature, or giants. So that in this ſenſe, all nations may be ſaid to be originally peopled by a ſon of Anac, or a giant. But this is ſubmitted as a conjecture to the reader's judgment.

v. 229. *Precious wine, the gift of Maron.*] Such digreſſions as theſe are frequent in Homer, but I am far from thinking them always beauties: it is true, they give variety to poetry; but whether they be an equivalent for calling off the attention of the reader from the more important action, and diverting it with ſmall incidents, is what I much queſtion. It is not indeed impoſſible but this Maron might have been the friend of Homer, and this praiſe of him will then be a monument of his grateful diſpoſition; and in this view a beauty. It muſt be confeſſed that Ulyſſes makes uſe of this wine to a very good effect, viz. to bring about the deſcription of Polypheme, and his own deliverance; and therefore it was neceſſary to ſet it off very particularly, but this might have been done in fewer lines. As it now ſtands it is a little epiſode; our expectations are raiſed to learn the event of ſo uncommon an adventure, when all of a ſudden Homer breaks the ſtory, and gives us a hiſtory of Maron. But I diſtruſt my judgment much rather than Homer's.

Seven golden talents to perfection wrought,
A ſilver bowl that held a copious draught,
And twelve large veſſels of unmingled wine,
Mellifluous, undecaying, and divine!
Which now ſome ages from his race conceal'd,
The hoary ſire in gratitude reveal'd;
Such was the wine: to quench whoſe fervent ſteam,
Scarce twenty meaſures from the living ſtream
To cool one cup ſuffic'd: the goblet crown'd
Breath'd aromatic fragrancies around.
Of this an ample vaſe we heav'd aboard,
And brought another with proviſions ſtor'd.
My ſoul foreboded I ſhould find the bow'r
Of ſome fell monſter, fierce with barb'rous pow'r,
Some ruſtic wretch, who liv'd in heav'n's deſpight,
Contemning laws, and trampling on the right.
The cave we found, but vacant all within,
(His flock the giant tended on the green)
But round the grot we gaze; and all we view,
In order rang'd, our admiration drew:

v. 243. *Scarce twenty meaſures from the living ſtream,*
To cool one cup ſuffic'd ———]

There is no wine of ſo ſtrong a body as to bear ſuch a diſproportionable quantity; but Homer amplifies the ſtrength of it to prepare the reader for its ſurpriſing effects immediately upon Polypheme.

v. 250. *Some ruſtic wretch, who liv'd*, &c.] This whole paſſage muſt be conſidered as told by a perſon long after the adventure was paſt, otherwiſe how ſhould Ulyſſes know that this cave was the habitation of a ſavage monſter before he had ſeen him? And when he tells us that himſelf and twelve companions went to ſearch, what people were inhabitants of this iſland? Euſtathius and Dacier ſeem both to overlook this obſervation; for in a following note ſhe condemns Ulyſſes for not flying from the iſland, as he was adviſed by his companions. But it, on the other hand, we ſuppoſe that Ulyſſes was under apprehenſions, from the ſavageneſs of the place, of finding a ſavage race of people, it will be natural enough that his mind ſhould forebode as much; and it appears from other paſſages, that this ſort of inſtinctive preſage was a favourite opinion of Homer's.

The bending ſhelves with loads of cheeſes preſt,
The folding flocks each ſep'rate from the reſt.
(The larger here, and there the leſſer lambs
The new fall'n young here bleating for their dams;
The kid diſtinguiſh'd from the lambkin lies:)
The cavern echoes with reſponſive cries.
Capacious chargers all around were laid,
Full pails, and veſſels of the milking trade.
With freſh proviſions hence our fleet to ſtore
My friends adviſe me, and to quit the ſhore;
Or drive a flock of ſheep and goats away,
Conſult our ſafety, and put off to ſea.
Their wholeſome counſel raſhly I declin'd,
Curious to view the man of monſtrous kind,
And try what ſocial rites a ſavage lends:
Dire rites alas! and fatal to my friends!
Then firſt a fire we kindle, and prepare
For his return with ſacrifice and pray'r.
The loaden ſhelves afford us full repaſt;
We ſit expecting. Lo! he comes at laſt.
Near half a foreſt on his back he bore,
And caſt the pond'rous burden at the door.
It thunder'd as it fell. We trembled then,
And ſought the deep receſſes of the den.
Now driv'n before him, thro' the arching rock,
Came tumbling, heaps on heaps, th' unnumber'd flock;
Big-udder'd ewes, and goats of female kind,
(The males were penn'd in outward courts behind)
Then, heav'd on high, a rock's enormous weight
To the cave's mouth he roll'd, and clos'd the gate.
(Scarce twenty-four wheel'd cars, compact and ſtrong,
The maſſy load could bear, or roll along.)
He next betakes him to his ev'ning cares,
And ſitting down, to milk his flocks prepares;
Of half their udders eaſes firſt the dams,
Then to the mother's teat ſubmits the lambs.

Half the white ſtream to hard'ning cheeſe he preſt,
And high in wicker-baſkets heap'd: the reſt,
Reſerv'd in bowls, ſupply'd the nightly feaſt.
His labour done, he fir'd the pile that gave
A ſudden blaze, and lighted all the cave.
We ſtand diſcovered by the riſing fires,
Aſkance the giant glares, and thus inquires.
What are ye, gueſts; on what adventure, ſay,
Thus far ye wander thro' the watr'y way?
Pirates perhaps, who ſeek thro' ſeas unknown
The lives of others, and expoſe your own?
His voice like thunder thro' the cavern ſounds:
My bold companions thrilling fear confounds,
Appall'd at ſight of more than mortal man!
At length, with heart recover'd, I began.
From Troy's fam'd fields, ſad wand'rers o'er the main,
Behold the relics of the Grecian train!
Thro' various ſeas by various veſſels toſt,
And forc'd by ſtorms, unwilling, on your coaſt;
Far from our deſtin'd courſe, and native land,
Such was our fate, and ſuch high Jove's command!
Nor what we are befits us to diſclaim,
Atrides' friends (in arms a mighty name)
Who taught proud Troy and all her ſons to bow;
Victors of late, but humble ſuppliants now!

v. 307. *From Troy's fam'd fields*, &c.] This ſpeech is very well adapted to make an impreſſion upon Polypheme. Ulyſſes applies to move either his fears or his compaſſion; he tells him he is an unfortunate perſon, and comes as a ſuppliant; and if this prevails nothing, he adds, he is a ſubject of the great Agamemnon, who had lately deſtroyed a mighty kingdom: which is ſpoken to make him afraid to offer violence to the ſubject of a king who had power to revenge any injuries offered his people. To intimidate him further, he concludes with the mention of the gods, and in particular of Jupiter, as avengers of any breach of the laws of hoſpitality: theſe are arguments well choſen to move any perſon, but an inhuman Polypheme. Euſtathius.

Low at thy knee thy ſuccour we implore;
Reſpect us, human, and relieve us, poor.
At leaſt ſome hoſpitable gift beſtow;
'Tis what the happy to th' unhappy owe:
'Tis what the gods require: thoſe gods revere,
The poor and ſtranger are their conſtant care;
To Jove their cauſe and their revenge belongs,
He wanders with them, and he feels their wrongs.
Fools that ye are! (the ſavage thus replies,
His inward fury blazing at his eyes)
Or ſtrangers, diſtant far from our abodes,
To bid me rev'rence or regard the gods.
Know then we Cyclops are a race, above
Thoſe air-bred people, and their goat-nurs'd Jove:
And learn, our power proceeds with thee and thine,
Not as he wills, but as ourſelves incline.
But anſwer, the good ſhip that brought ye o'er,
Where lies ſhe anchor'd? near or off the ſhore?
Thus he. His meditated fraud I find,
(Vers'd in the turns of various human kind)
And cautious, thus. Againſt a dreadful rock,
Faſt by your ſhore the gallant veſſel broke,
Scarce with theſe few I 'ſcap'd; of all my train,
Whom angry Neptune whelm'd beneath the main;
The ſcatter'd wreck the winds blew back again.
He anſwer'd with his deed. His bloody hand
Snatch'd two, unhappy! of my martial band;
And daſh'd like dogs againſt the ſtony floor:
The pavement ſwims with brains and mingled gore.

v. 344. *And daſh'd like dogs* ——
The pavement ſwims, &c.

There is a great beauty in the verſification in the original.

Σὺν δὲ δύω μάρψας, ὥςε κύνλακας ποτὶ γαίῃ
Κόπτ' ἐκ δ' ἐγκεφαλὸς χαμάδις ῥέε, δεῦε δὲ γαῖαν.

Dionyſius Halicarn. takes notice of it, in his Diſſertation upon placing words: when the companions of Ulyſſes, ſays that author,

Torn limb from limb, he ſpreads his horrid feaſt,
And fierce devours it like a mountain beaſt:
He ſucks the marrow, and the blood he drains,
Nor entrails, fleſh, nor ſolid bone remains.
We ſee the death from which we cannot move,
And humbled groan beneath the hand of Jove.
His ample maw with human carnage fill'd,
A milky deluge next the giant ſwill'd;
Then ſtretch'd in length o'er half the cavern'd rock,
Lay ſenſeleſs and ſupine, amidſt the flock.
To ſeize the time, and with a ſudden wound
To fix the ſlumb'ring monſter to the ground,
My ſoul impels me; and in act I ſtand
To draw the ſword; but wiſdom held my hand.
A deed ſo raſh had finiſh'd all our fate,
No mortal forces from the lofty gate
Could roll the rock, in hopeleſs grief we lay,
And ſigh, expecting the return of day.
Now did the roſy finger'd morn ariſe,
And ſhed her ſacred light along the ſkies.
He wakes, he lights the fire, he milks the dams,
And to the mother's teats ſubmits the lambs.
The taſk thus finiſh'd of his morning hours,
Two more he ſnatches, murders, and devours.

are daſhed againſt the rock, to expreſs the horrour of the action, Homer dwells upon the moſt inharmonious harſh letters and ſyllables: he no where uſes any ſoftneſs, or any run of verſes to pleaſe the ear. Scaliger injudiciouſly condemns this deſcription; "Homer (ſays he) "makes uſe of the moſt offenſive and loathſome expreſſions, more "fit for a butcher's ſhambles than the majeſty of heroic poetry." Macrobius, lib. v. cap. 13. of his Saturnalia, commends theſe lines of Homer, and even prefers them before the ſame deſcription in Virgil: his words are, "Narrationem facti nudam Maro poſuit, "Homerus πάθος miſcuit, & dolore narrandi invidiam crudelitatis "æquavit." And indeed he muſt be a ſtrange critic that expects ſoft verſes upon a horrible occaſion, whereas the verſes ought, if poſſible, to repreſent the thought they are intended to convey; and every perſon's ear will inform him that Homer has not in this paſſage executed this rule unſucceſsfully.

Then pleas'd and whiſtling, drives his flock before;
Removes the rocky mountain from the door,
And ſhuts again: with equal eaſe diſpos'd,
As a light quiver's lid is op'd and clos'd.
His giant voice the echoing region fills:
His flocks, obedient, ſpread o'er all the hills.
Thus left behind, e'en in the laſt deſpair
I thought, devis'd, and Pallas heard my prayer.
Revenge, and doubt, and caution work'd my breaſt;
But this of many counſels ſeem'd the beſt:
The monſter's club within the cave I 'ſpy'd,
A tree of ſtatelieſt growth, and yet undry'd,
Green from the wood; of height and bulk ſo vaſt,
The largeſt ſhip might claim it for a maſt.
This ſhorten'd of its top, I gave my train
A fathom's length, to ſhape it and to plain;
The narrow'r end I ſharpen'd to a ſpire;
Whoſe point we harden'd with the force of fire,
And hid it in the duſt that ſtrow'd the cave.
Then to my few companions, bold and brave,
Propos'd, who firſt the vent'rous deed ſhould try,
In the broad orbit of his monſtrous eye
To plunge the brand, and twirl the pointed wood,
When ſlumber next ſhould tame the man of blood.
Juſt as I wiſh'd, the lots were caſt on four:
Myſelf the fifth. We ſtand and wait the hour.
He comes with ev'ning: all his fleecy flock
Before him march, and pour into the rock:

v. 394. —— *the lots were caſt* ——] Ulyſſes bids his friends to caſt lots; this is done to ſhew that he would not voluntarily expoſe them to ſo imminent danger. If he had made the choice himſelf, they whom he had choſen might have thought he had given them up to deſtruction, and they whom he had rejected might have judged it a ſtain upon them as a want of merit, and ſo have complained of injuſtice; but by this method he avoids theſe inconveniencies.

Not one, or male or female ſtaid behind;
(So fortune chanc'd, or ſo ſome god deſign'd)
Then heaving high the ſtone's unwieldy weight,
He roll'd it on the cave, and clos'd the gate.
Firſt down he ſits, to milk the woolly dams,
And then permits their udder to the lambs.
Next ſeiz'd two wretches more, and headlong caſt,
Brain'd on the rock; his ſecond dire repaſt.
I then approach'd him reeking with their gore,
And held the brimming goblet foaming o'er:
Cyclop! ſince human fleſh has been thy feaſt,
Now drain this goblet, potent to digeſt:
Know hence what treaſures in our ſhip we loſt,
And what rich liquors other climates boaſt.
We to thy ſhore the precious freight ſhall bear,
If home thou ſend us, and vouchſafe to ſpare.
But oh! thus furious, thirſting thus for gore,
The ſons of men ſhall ne'er approach thy ſhore,
And never ſhalt thou taſte this nectar more.
He heard, he took, and pouring down his throat
Delighted, ſwill'd the large luxurious draught.
More! give me more, he cry'd: the boon be thine,
Whoe'er thou art that bear'ſt celeſtial wine!
Declare thy name; not mortal is this juice,
Such as th' unbleſt Cyclopean climes produce,
(Tho' ſure our vine the largeſt cluſter yields,
And Jove's ſcorn'd thunder ſerves to drench our fields)
But this deſcended from the bleſt abodes,
A rill of nectar, ſtreaming from the gods.

v. 399. ——— *or ſo ſome god deſign'd.*] Ulyſſes aſcribes it to the influence of the gods that Polypheme drives the whole flock into his den, and does not ſeparate the females from the males as he had before done; for by this accident Ulyſſes makes his eſcape, as appears from the following part of the ſtory. Homer here uſes the word διαμένος, to ſhew the ſuſpicion which Polypheme might entertain that Ulyſſes had other companions abroad who might plunder his flocks; and this gives another reaſon why he drove them all into his cave, namely for the greater ſecurity.

He ſaid, and greedy graſp'd the heady bowl,
Thrice drain'd, and pour'd the deluge on his ſoul.
His ſenſe lay cover'd with the dozy fume;
While thus my fraudful ſpeech I reaſſume.
Thy promis'd boon, O Cyclop! now I claim,
And plead my title: Noman is my name.
By that diſtinguiſh'd from my tender years,
'Tis what my parents call me, and my peers.
The giant then. Our promis'd grace receive,
The hoſpitable boon we mean to give:
When all thy wretched crew have felt my pow'r,
Noman ſhall be the laſt I will devour.
He ſaid: then nodding with the fumes of wine,
Dropt his huge head, and ſnoring lay ſupine.

v. 432. ——— *Noman is my name.*] I will not trouble the reader with a long account of ὄτις to be found in Euſtathius, who ſeems delighted with this piece of pleaſantry; nor with what Dacier obſerves, who declares ſhe approves of it extremely, and calls it a very happy imagination. If it were modeſty in me to diſſent from Homer, and two commentators, I would own my opinion of it, and acknowledge the whole to be nothing but a colluſion of words, and fitter to have place in a farce or comedy, than in epic poetry. Lucian has thus uſed it, and applied it to raiſe laughter in one of his facetious dialogues. The whole wit or jeſt lies in the ambiguity of ὄτις, which Ulyſſes impoſes upon Polypheme as his own name, which in reality ſignifies "no man." I doubt not but Homer was well pleaſed with it, for afterwards he plays upon the word, and calls Ulyſſes ὀτιδανὸς ὄτις. But the faults of Homer have a kind of veneration, perhaps like old age, from their antiquity.

Euripides has tranſlated this whole paſſage in his tragedy called the Cyclops. The chorus begins thus, "Why doſt thou thus cry out, "Cyclops?" Cyc. "I am undone." Cho. "You ſeem to be in "a woful condition." Cyc. "I am utterly miſerable." Cho. You "have been drunk and fallen into the embers." Cyc. "Noman "has undone me." Cho. "Well then, No man has injured you." Cyc. "Noman has blinded me." Cho. "Then you are not "blind."

This appears to me more fit for the two Soſias in Plautus, than for tragic or epic poetry; and I fancy an author who ſhould introduce ſuch a ſport of words upon the ſtage, even in the comedy of our days, would meet with ſmall applauſe.

His neck obliquely o'er his ſhoulders hung,
Preſt with the weight of ſleep that tames the ſtrong!
There belcht the mingled ſtreams of wine and blood,
And human fleſh, his indigeſted food.
Sudden I ſtir the embers, and inſpire
With animating breath the ſeeds of fire;
Each drooping ſpirit with bold words repair,
And urge my train the dreadful deed to dare.
The ſtake now glow'd beneath the burning bed
(Green as it was) and ſparkled fi'ry red.
Then forth the vengeful inſtrument I bring;
With beating hearts my fellows form a ring.
Urg'd by ſome preſent god, they ſwift let fall
The pointed torment on his viſual ball.
Myſelf above them from a riſing ground
Guide the ſharp ſtake, and twirl it round and round.
As when a ſhipwright ſtands his workmen o'er,
Who ply the wimble, ſome huge beam to bore;
Urg'd on all hands it nimbly ſpins about,
The grain deep-piercing till it ſcoops it out;
In his broad eye ſo whirls the fi'ry wood;
From the pierc'd pupil ſpouts the boiling blood;

v. 458. ——— *who ply the wimble.*] This and the following compariſon are drawn from low life, but ennobled with a dignity of expreſſion. Inſtead of ἕλονλες, Ariſtarchus reads ἔχονλες, as Euſtathius informs us. The ſimilitudes are natural and lively, we are made ſpectators of what they repreſent. Sophocles has imitated this, in the tragedy where OEdipus tears out his own eyes; and Euripides has transferred this whole adventure into his Cyclops with very little alteration, and in particular the former compariſon. But to inſtance in all that Euripides has imitated, would be to tranſcribe a great part of that tragedy. In ſhort, this epiſode in general is very noble; but if the interlude about Οὖτις be at all allowable in ſo grave and majeſtic a poem, it is only allowable becauſe it is here related before a light and injudicious aſſembly; I mean the Phæacians, to whom any thing more great or ſerious would have been leſs pleaſing; ſo that the poet writes to his audience. I wonder this has never been offered in defence of this low entertainment.

Sindg'd are his brows; the ſcorching lids grow black;
The jelly bubbles, and the fibres crack.
And as when arm'rers temper in the ford
The keen-edg'd pole-ax, or the ſhining ſword,
The red-hot metal hiſſes in the lake,
Thus in his eye-ball hiſs'd the plunging ſtake.
He ſends a dreadful groan: the rocks around
Thro' all their inmoſt winding caves reſound.
Scar'd we receded. Forth, with frantic hand
He tore, and daſh'd on earth the goary brand:
Then calls the Cyclops, all that round him dwell,
With voice like thunder, and a direful yell.
From all their dens the one-ey'd race repair,
From rifted rocks, and mountains bleak in air.
All haſte aſſembled, at his well-known roar,
Enquire the cauſe, and croud the cavern door.
What hurts thee, Polypheme? what ſtrange affright
Thus breaks our ſlumbers, and diſturbs the night?
Does any mortal in th' unguarded hour
Of ſleep, oppreſs thee, or by fraud or pow'r?
Or thieves inſidious the fair flock ſurpriſe?
Thus they: the Cyclop from his den replies,
Friends, Noman kills me; Noman in the hour
Of ſleep, oppreſſes me with fraudful pow'r.
"If no man hurt thee, but the hand divine
"Inflict diſeaſe, it fits thee to reſign:
"To Jove or to thy father Neptune pray,"
The brethren cry'd, and inſtant ſtrode away.
Joy touch'd my ſecret ſoul, and conſcious heart,
Pleas'd with th' effect of conduct and of art.
Meantime the Cyclop, raging with his wound,
Spreads his wide arms, and ſearches round and round:
At laſt, the ſtone removing from the gate,
With hands extended in the midſt he ſat:

v. 495. ——— *the ſtone removing from the gate.*] This conduct of Polypheme may ſeem very abſurd, and it looks to be improbable

And ſearch'd each paſſing ſheep, and felt it o'er,
Secure to ſeize us ere we reach'd the door.
(Such as his ſhallow wit, he deem'd was mine)
But ſecret I revolv'd the deep deſign;
'Twas for our lives my lab'ring boſom wrought;
Each ſcheme I turn'd, and ſharpen'd every thought;
This way and that, I caſt to ſave my friends,
'Till one reſolve my varying counſel ends.
Strong were the rams, with native purple fair,
Well fed, and largeſt of the fleecy care.
Theſe three and three, with oſier bands we ty'd
(The twining bands the Cyclop's bed ſupply'd)
The midmoſt bore a man; the outward two
Secur'd each ſide: ſo bound we all the crew.
One ram remain'd, the leader of the flock;
In his deep fleece my graſping hands I lock,

that he ſhould not call the other giants to aſſiſt him, in the detection of the perſons who had taken his ſight from him; eſpecially when it was now day-light, and they at hand. Euſtathius was aware of the objection, and imputes it to his folly and dulneſs. Tully, 5 Tuſcul. gives the ſame character of Polypheme; and becauſe it vindicates Homer for introducing a ſpeech of Polypheme to his ram; I will beg leave to tranſcribe it. "Tireſiam, quem "ſapientem fingunt poetæ, nunquam inducunt deplorantem Cæ-"citatem ſuam: at verò Polyphemum Homerus, cum immanem "ferumque finxiſſet, cum ariete etiam colloquentem facit, ejuſque "laudare fortunas, quod quà vellet, ingredi poſſet, & quæ vellet "attingere: recte hic equidem; nihilo enim erat ipſe Cyclops quam "aries ille prudentior." This is a full defence of Homer; but Tully has miſtaken the words of Polypheme to the ram, for there is no reſemblance to "ejus laudare fortunas, quod quà vellet ingredi poſſet, &c." I ſuppoſe Tully quoted by memory.

v. 511. *One ram remain'd, the leader of the flock.*] This paſſage has been miſunderſtood, to imply that Ulyſſes took more care of himſelf than of his companions, in chuſing the largeſt ram for his own convenience: an imputation unworthy of the character of a hero. But there is no ground for it, he takes more care of his friends than of his own perſon, for he allots them three ſheep, and lets them eſcape before him. Beſides, this conduct was neceſſary; for all his friends were bound, and, by chuſing this ram, he keeps himſelf at liberty to unbind the reſt after their eſcape.

And faſt beneath, in woolly curls inwove,
There cling implicit, and confide in Jove.
When roſy morning glimmer'd o'er the dales,
He drove to paſture all the luſty males:
The ewes ſtill folded, with diſtended thighs
Unmilk'd, lay bleating in diſtreſsful cries.
But heedleſs of thoſe cares, with anguiſh ſtung,
He felt their fleeces as they paſs'd along.
(Fool that he was) and let them ſafely go,
All unſuſpecting of their freight below.
The maſter ram at laſt approach'd the gate,
Charg'd with his wool, and with Ulyſſes' fate.
Him while he paſt the monſter blind beſpoke:
What makes my ram the lag of all the flock?
Firſt thou wert wont to crop the flow'ry mead,
Firſt to the field and river's bank to lead,

Neither was there any other method practicable, for, being the laſt there was no perſon to bind him. Euſtathius.

The care Ulyſſes takes of his companions agrees with the character of Horace,

"Dum ſibi, dum ſociis reditum parat, aſpera multa
"Pertulit." ——

But it may ſeem improbable that a ram ſhould be able to carry ſo great a burden as Ulyſſes; the generation of ſheep, as well as men, may appear to have decreaſed ſince the days of Ulyſſes. Homer himſelf ſeems to have guarded againſt this objection, he deſcribes theſe ſheep as εὐτρεφέες, καλοὶ, μεγάλοι; the ram is ſpoken of as μακρὰ βιβὰς (an expreſſion applied to Ajax, as Euſtathius obſerves, in the Iliad.) Hiſtory informs us of ſheep of a very large ſize in other countries, and a poet is at liberty to chuſe the largeſt, if by that method he gives his ſtory a greater appearance of probability.

v. 517. *The ewes ſtill folded* ——
Unmilk'd, lay bleating ——

This particularity may ſeem of no importance, and conſequently unneceſſary: but it is in poetry as in painting; they both with very good effect uſe circumſtances that are not abſolutely neceſſary to the ſubject, but only appendages and embelliſhments. This particular has that effect, it repreſents nature, and therefore gives an air of truth and probability to the ſtory. Dacier.

And firſt with ſtately ſtep at ev'ning hour
Thy fleecy fellows uſher to their bow'r.
Now far the laſt, with penſive pace and ſlow
Thou mov'ſt, as conſcious of thy maſter's woe!
Seeſt thou theſe lids that now unfold in vain?
(The deed of Noman and his wicked train)
Oh! didſt thou feel for thy afflicted lord,
And wou'd but fate the pow'r of ſpeech afford;
Soon might'ſt thou tell me, where in ſecret here
The daſtard lurks all trembling with his fear:
Swung round and round, and daſh'd from rock to rock,
His batter'd brains ſhou'd on the pavement ſmoke.
No eaſe, no pleaſure my ſad heart receives,
While ſuch a monſter as vile Noman lives.
  The giant ſpoke, and thro' the hollow rock
Diſmiſs'd the ram, the father of the flock.
No ſooner freed, and thro' th' incloſure paſt,
Firſt I releaſe myſelf, my fellows laſt:
Fat ſheep and goats in throngs we drive before,
And reach our veſſel on the winding ſhore.
With joy the ſailors view their friends return'd,
And hail us living whom as dead they mourn'd.
Big tears of tranſport ſtand in ev'ry eye,
I check their fondneſs, and command to fly.
Aboard in haſte they heave the wealthy ſheep,
And ſnatch their oars, and ruſh into the deep.
  Now off at ſea, and from the ſhallows clear,
As far as human voice could reach the ear;
With taunts the diſtant giant I accoſt,
Hear me, oh Cyclop! hear ungracious hoſt!
'Twas on no coward, no ignoble ſlave,
Thou meditat'ſt thy meal in yonder cave;
But one, the vengeance fated from above
Doom'd to inflict; the inſtrument of Jove.
Thy barb'rous breach of hoſpitable bands,
The god, the god revenges by my hands.

Theſe words the Cyclop's burning rage provoke :
From the tall hill he rends a pointed rock ; 566
High o'er the billows flew the maſſy load,
And near the ſhip came thund'ring on the flood.
It almoſt bruſh'd the helm, and fell before :
The whole ſea ſhook, and refluent beat the ſhore. 570

v. 569. *It almoſt bruſh'd the helm*, &c.] The ancients, remarks Euſtathius, placed an obeliſk and aſteriſm before this verſe ; the former, to note that they thought it miſplaced ; the latter, to ſhew that they looked upon it as a beauty. Apparently it is not agreeable to the deſcription ; for how is it poſſible that this huge rock falling before the veſſel ſhould endanger the rudder, which is in the ſtern ? Can a ſhip ſail with the ſtern foremoſt ? Some ancient critics, to take away the contradiction, have aſſerted that Ulyſſes turned his ſhip to ſpeak to Polypheme ; but this is abſurd, for why could not Ulyſſes ſpeak from the ſtern as well as from the prow ; it therefore ſeems that the verſe ought to be entirely omitted, as undoubtedly it may without any chaſm in the author. We find it inſerted a little lower, and there it correſponds with the deſcription, and ſtands with propriety.

But if we ſuppoſe that the ſhip of Ulyſſes lay at ſuch a diſtance from the cave of Polypheme, as to make it neceſſary to bring it nearer, to be heard diſtinctly ; then indeed we may ſolve the difficulty, and let the verſe ſtand : for if we ſuppoſe Ulyſſes approaching towards Polypheme, then the rock may be ſaid to be thrown before the veſſel, that is, beyond it, and endanger the rudder, and this bears ſome appearance of probability.

This paſſage brings to my memory a deſcription of Polypheme in Apollonius, Argonaut. 1.

Κεῖνος ἀνὴρ καὶ πόντε ἐπὶ γλαυκοῖο θέεσκεν
Οἴδματος, οὐδὲ θοὰς βάπτεν πόδας ἀλλ' ὅσον ἄκροις
Ἴχνεσι τεθγόμενος διερῇ περφόρητο κελεύθῳ.

If Polypheme had really this quality of running upon the waves, he might have deſtroyed Ulyſſes without throwing this mountain ; but Apollonius is undoubtedly guilty of an abſurdity, and one might rather believe that he would ſink the earth at every ſtep, than run upon the waters with ſuch lightneſs as not to wet his feet. Virgil has more judiciouſly applied thoſe lines to Camilla in his Æneas.

" —— Mare per medium fluctu ſuſpenſa tumenti
" Ferret iter, celeres nec tingeret æquore plantas."

The poet expreſſes the ſwiftneſs of Camilla in the nimble flow of the verſe, which conſiſts almoſt entirely of dactyles, and runs off with the utmoſt rapidity, like the laſt of thoſe quoted from Apollonius.

The ſtrong concuſſion on the heaving tide
Roll'd back the veſſel to the iſland's ſide:
Again I ſhov'd her off; our fate to fly,
Each nerve we ſtretch, and ev'ry oar we ply.
Juſt ſcap'd impending death, when now again
We twice as far had furrow'd back the main,
Once more I raiſe my voice; my friends afraid
With mild entreaties my deſign diſſuade.
What boots the god-leſs giant to provoke?
Whoſe arm may ſink us at a ſingle ſtroke.
Already, when the dreadful rock he threw,
Old ocean ſhook, and back his ſurges flew.
The ſounding voice directs his aim again;
The rock o'erwhelms us, and we 'ſcap'd in vain.
But I, of mind elate, and ſcorning fear,
Thus with new taunts inſult the monſter's ear.
Cyclop! if any, pitying thy diſgrace,
Aſk who diſfigur'd thus that eye-leſs face?
Say, 'twas Ulyſſes; twas his deed, declare,
Laertes' ſon, of Ithaca the fair;
Ulyſſes, far in fighting fields renown'd,
Before whoſe arm Troy tumbled to the ground.
Th' aſtoniſh'd ſavage with a roar replies:
Oh heav'ns! oh faith of ancient prophecies!
This, Telemus Eurymedes foretold,
(The mighty ſeer who on theſe hills grew old;

v. 595. *This, Telemus Eurymedes foretold.*] This incident ſufficiently ſhews the uſe of that diſſimulation which enters into the character of Ulyſſes: if he had diſcovered his name, the Cyclop had deſtroyed him as his moſt dangerous enemy. Plutarch in his diſcourſe upon Garrulity, commends the fidelity of the companions of Ulyſſes, who when they were dragged by this giant and daſhed againſt the rock, confeſſed not a word concerning their lord, and ſcorned to purchaſe their lives at the expence of their honeſty. Ulyſſes himſelf, adds he, was the moſt eloquent and moſt ſilent of men; he knew that a word ſpoken never wrought ſo much good, as a word concealed; men teach us to ſpeak, but the gods teach us ſilence; for ſilence is the firſt thing that is taught us at our

Skill'd the dark fate of mortals to declare,
And learn'd in all wing'd omens of the air)
Long ſince he menac'd, ſuch was fate's command;
And nam'd Ulyſſes as the deſtin'd hand.
I deem'd ſome god-like giant to behold,
Or lofty hero, haughty, brave and bold;
Not this weak pigmy wretch of mean deſign,
Who not by ſtrength ſubdu'd me, but by wine.
But come, accept our gifts, and join to pray
Great Neptune's bleſſing on the wat'ry way:
For his I am, and I the lineage own:
Th' immortal father no leſs boaſts the ſon.
His pow'r can heal me, and re-light my eye;
And only his, of all the gods on high.
Oh! could this arm (I thus aloud rejoin'd)
From that vaſt bulk diſlodge thy bloody mind,
And ſend thee howling to the realms of night!
As ſure as Neptune cannot give thee ſight.

initiation into ſacred myſteries; and we find theſe companions had profited under ſo great a maſter in ſilence as Ulyſſes.

Ovid relates this prophecy in the ſtory of Polypheme and Galatea.

"Telemus interea Siculum delatus in æquor,
"Telemus Eurymedes, quem nulla ſefellerat ales,
"Terribilem Polyphemon adit; iumenque quod unum
"Fronte geris mediâ, rapiet tibi, dixit, Ulyſſes:
"Riſit, et, O vatum ſtolidiſſime, falleris, inquit
"Altera jam rapuit:" ———

v. 603. *Not this weak pigmy wretch.*———] This is ſpoken in compliance with the character of a giant; the Phæacians wondered at the manly ſtature of Ulyſſes; Polypheme ſpeaks of him as a dwarf; his rage undoubtedly made him treat him with ſo much contempt. Nothing in nature can be better imagined than this ſtory of the Cyclops, if we conſider the aſſembly before which it was ſpoken; I mean the Phæacians, who had been driven from their habitation by the Cyclopeans, as appears from the ſixth of the Odyſſey, and compelled to make a new ſettlement in their preſent country: Ulyſſes gratifies them by ſhewing what revenge he took upon one of their ancient enemies, and they could not decently refuſe aſſiſtance to a perſon, who had puniſhed thoſe who had inſulted their fore-fathers.

Thus I: while raging he repeats his cries,
With hands uplifted to the ſtarry ſkies.
Hear me, oh Neptune! thou whoſe arms are hurl'd
From ſhore to ſhore, and gird the ſolid world.
If thine I am, nor thou my birth diſown,
And if th' unhappy Cyclop be thy ſon;
Let not Ulyſſes breathe his native air,
Laertes' ſon, of Ithaca the fair.
to review his country be his fate,
Be it thro' toils and ſuff'rings, long and late,
His loſt companions let him firſt deplore;
Some veſſel, not his own, tranſport him o'er;
And when at home from foreign ſuff'rings freed,
More near and deep, domeſtic woes ſucceed!
With imprecations thus he fill'd the air,
And angry Neptune heard th' unrighteous pray'r.
A larger rock then heaving from the plain,
He whirl'd it round: it ſung acroſs the main:
It fell, and bruſh'd the ſtern: the billows roar,
Shake at the weight, and refluent beat the ſhore.
With all our force we kept aloof to ſea,
And gain'd the iſland where our veſſels lay.
Our ſight the whole collected navy chear'd,
Who, waiting long, by turns had hop'd and fear'd.
There diſembarking on the green ſea-ſide,
We land our cattle, and the ſpoil divide:

v. 617. *The prayer of the Cyclops.*] This is a maſter-piece of art in Ulyſſes; he ſhews Neptune to be his enemy, which might deter the Phæacians from aſſiſting in his tranſporation, yet brings this very circumſtance as an argument to induce them to it. "O "Neptune, ſays the Cyclops, deſtroy Ulyſſes, or if he be fated to "return, may it be in a veſſel not of his own!" Here he plainly tells the Phæacians that the prayer of Cyclops was almoſt accompliſhed, for his own ſhips were deſtroyed by Neptune, and now he was ready to ſail in a foreign veſſel; by which the whole prayer would be compleated. By this he perſuades them, that they were the people ordained by the fates to land him in his own country.

Of theſe due ſhares to every ſailor fall;
The maſter ram was voted mine by all:
And him (the guardian of Ulyſſes' fate)
With pious mind to heav'n I conſecrate.
But the great god whoſe thunder rends the ſkies.
Averſe, beholds the ſmoking ſacrifice;
And ſees me wand'ring ſtill from coaſt to coaſt;
And all my veſſels, all my people, loſt!
While thoughtleſs we indulge the genial rite,
As plenteous cates and flowing bowls invite;
'Till ev'ning Phœbus roll'd away the light:
Stretch'd on the ſhore in careleſs eaſe we reſt,
'Till ruddy morning purpled o'er the eaſt.

v. 642. *The maſter ram was voted mine* ———] This perhaps might be a preſent of honour and diſtinction: but I ſhould rather take it with Euſtathius to be the ram which brought Ulyſſes out of the den of Polypheme. That here immediately offers it in ſacrifice to Jupiter, in gratitude for his deliverance; an inſtance of piety to be imitated in more enlightened ages.

The book concludes with a teſtimony of this hero's humanity; in the midſt of the joy for his own ſafety, his generous heart finds room for a tender ſentiment for the loſs of his companions; both his joys and his ſorrows are commendable and virtuous.

Virgil has borrowed this epiſode of Polyphemus, and inſerted it into the third of the Æneis. I will not preſume to decide which author has the greateſt ſucceſs, they both have their peculiar excellencies. Rapin confeſſes this epiſode to be equal to any parts of the Iliad, that it is an original, and that Homer introduced that monſtrous character to ſhew the marvellous, and paint it in a new ſet of colours. Demetrius Phalereus calls it a piece of ſublime ſtrangely horrible; and Longinus, even while he is condemning the Odyſſey, allows this adventure of Polypheme to be very great and beautiful; (for ſo Monſieur Boileau underſtands Longinus, though Monſieur Dacier differs from his judgment.) In Homer we find a greater variety of natural incidents than in Virgil, but in Virgil a greater pomp of verſe. Homer is not uniform in his deſcription, but ſometimes ſtoops perhaps below the dignity of epic poetry; Virgil walks along with an even, grave, and majeſtic pace: they both raiſe our admiration, mixed with delight and terrour.

† See Bk. 10 note 69 & 79

Then from their anchors all our ſhips unbind,
And mount the decks, and call the willing wind.
Now rang'd in order on our banks, we ſweep
With haſty ſtrokes the hoarſe reſounding deep;
Blind to the future, penſive with our fears,
Glad for the living, for the dead in tears.

THE

ODYSSEY.

*BOOK X.

THE ARGUMENT.

Adventures with Æolus, the Leſtrigons, and Circe.

Ulyſſes arrives at the iſland of Æolus, who gives him proſperous winds, and incloſes the adverſe ones in a bag, which his companions untying, they are driven back again, and rejected. Then they ſail to the Leſtrigons, where they loſe eleven ſhips, and with one only remaining, proceed to the iſland of Circe. Eurylochus is ſent firſt with ſome companions, all which, except Eurylochus, are transformed into ſwine. Ulyſſes then undertakes the adventure, and by the help of Mercury, who gives him the herb Moly, overcomes the enchantreſs, and procures the reſtoration of his men. After a year's ſtay with her, he prepares at her inſtigation for his voyage to the infernal ſhades.

AT length we reach'd Æolia's ſea-girt ſhore,
Where great Hippotades the ſceptre bore,
A floating iſle! high-rais'd by toil divine,
Strong walls of braſs the rocky coaſt confine.

* Poetry is a mixture of hiſtory and fable; the foundation is hiſtorical, becauſe the poet does not entirely neglect truth; the reſt is fabulous, becauſe naked truth would not be ſufficiently ſurpriſing; for the marvellous ought to take place, eſpecially in epic poetry. But it may be aſked, does not Homer offend againſt all degrees of probability in theſe epiſodes of the Sirens, Scylla and Charybdis, Cyclops and Antiphates? How are theſe incredible ſtories to be reduced into the bounds of probability? It is true, the marvellous ought to be uſed in epic poetry; but ought it to

Six blooming youths, in private grandeur bred,
And ſix fair daughters, grac'd the royal bed:

tranſgreſs all power of belief? Ariſtotle in his Art of Poetry lays down a rule to juſtify theſe incidents: "A poet, ſays that author, ought "to prefer things impoſſible, provided they are probable, before "things poſſible, that are nevertheleſs incredible." Chap. xv. This rule is not without obſcurity; but Monſieur Dacier has explained it in his annotations upon that author: a thing may be impoſſible, and yet probable: thus when the poet introduces a deity, any incident humanly impoſſible receives a full probability by being aſcribed to the ſkill and power of a god: it is thus we juſtify the ſtory of the transformation of the ſhip of the Phæacians into a rock, and the fleet of Æneas into ſea-nymphs. But ſuch relations ought not to be too frequent in a poem; for it is an eſtabliſhed rule, that all incidents which require a divine probability only, ſhould be ſo diſengaged from the action, that they may be ſubtracted from it without deſtroying it; for inſtance, if we omit the transformation of the ſhip, the action of the Odyſſey will retain the ſame perfection. And therefore thoſe epiſodes which are neceſſary, and make eſſential parts of the poem, ought to be grounded upon human probability; now the epiſodes of Circe, Polypheme, the Sirens, &c. are neceſſary to the action of the Odyſſey: but will any man ſay they are within the bounds of human probability? How then ſhall we ſolve this difficulty? Homer artificially has brought them within the degrees of it; he makes Ulyſſes relate them before a credulous and ignorant aſſembly; he lets us into the character of the Phæacians, by ſaying they were a very dull nation, in the ſixth book,

Where never ſcience rear'd her laurel'd head.

It is thus the poet gives probability to his fables, by reciting them to a people who believed them, and who through a lazineſs of life were fond of romantic ſtories; he adapts himſelf to his audience, and yet even here he is not unmindful of his more intelligent readers: he gives them (obſerves Boſſu) in theſe fables all the pleaſure that can be reaped from phyſical or moral truths, diſguiſed under miraculous allegories, and by this method reconciles them to poetical probability.

There are ſeveral heads to which probability may be reduced; either to divinity, and then nothing is improbable, for every thing is poſſible to a deity; or to our idea, of things whether true or falſe: thus in the deſcent of Ulyſſes into hell, there is not one word of probability or hiſtoric truth; but if we examine it by the ideas that the old world entertained of hell, it becomes probable; or laſtly, we may have reſpect to vulgar opinion or fame; for a poet is at liberty to relate a falſhood, provided it be commonly believed to be true. We might have recourſe to this laſt rule, which is likewiſe laid down by Ariſtotle, to vindicate the Odyſſey, if

Theſe ſons their ſiſters wed, and all remain,
Their parents pride, and pleaſure of their reign.

there were occaſion for it; for in all ages ſuch fables have found belief.

I will only add, that Virgil has given a ſanction to theſe ſtories, by inſerting them in his Æneis; and Horace calls them by the remarkable epithet of ſpecious miracles.

"—— Ut ſpecioſa dehinc miracula promat,
"Antiphaten, Scyllamque & cum Cyclope Charybdin."

Longinus calls theſe fables dreams, but adds, that they are the dreams of Jupiter; he likewiſe blames thoſe epiſodes, becauſe in all of them there is much more fable and narration than action: which criticiſm may perhaps be too ſevere, if we conſider that paſt adventures are here brought into preſent uſe, and though they be not actions, yet they are the repreſentations of actions, agreeable to the nature of epiſodes.

It may be queſtioned if Virgil is ſo happy in the choice of the audience to which he relates many of theſe fables; the Carthaginians were not ignorant like the Phæacians: from whence then do his ſtories receive their probability? It is not ſo eaſy to anſwer this objection, unleſs we have recourſe to common fame: Virgil was not the author of them, Homer had eſtabliſhed them, and brought them into fame, ſo that Virgil had common opinion to vindicate him, joined with Homer's authority.

v. 1. *We reach'd Æolia's ſhore.*] It is difficult to diſtinguiſh what is truth from what is fiction in this relation: Diodorus, who was a Sicilian, ſpeaks of Æolus, and refers to this paſſage: "This is that "Æolus, ſays he, who entertained Ulyſſes in his voyages: he is re- "ported to have been a pious and juſt prince, and given to hoſpitality, "and therefore φίλος ἀθανάτοις, as Homer expreſſes it." But whence has the fable of his being the governour of the winds taken its foundation? Euſtathius tells us, that he was a very wiſe man, and one who from long obſervation could foretell what weather was like to follow: others ſay he was an aſtronomer, and ſtudied chiefly the nature of the winds; and as Atlas from his knowledge in aſtronomy was ſaid to ſuſtain the heavens; ſo Æolus, from his experience and obſervation, was fabled to be the ruler or diſpoſer of the winds. But what explication can be given of this bag, in which he is ſaid to bind the winds? Eratoſthenes, continues Euſtathius, ſaid pleaſantly, that we ſhall then find the places where Ulyſſes voyaged, when we have diſcovered the artiſt, or cobler, τὸν ῥάπτην, who ſewed up this bag of the winds. But the reaſon of the fiction is ſuppoſed to be this: Æolus taught the uſe and management of ſails, and having foretold Ulyſſes from what quarter the winds would blow, he may be ſaid to have gathered them into a kind of incloſure and retained them as uſe ſhould require. Diodorus explains it a little differently,

All day they feaſt, all day the bowls flow round,
And joy and muſic thro' the iſle reſound : 10

lib. v. Πρὸς δὲ τοῦτοις τὴν τῶν ἱςίων χρείαν τοῖς ναυτικοῖς ἐπεισηγήσασθαι, καὶ ἀπὸ τῆς τοῦ πυρὸς προσημασίας παρατεθεικότα, προλέγειν τοῖς ἐγχωρίοις ἀνέμους εὐςόχως, ἐξ οὗ ταμίαν ἀνέμων μῦθος ἀνέδειξε : that is, "He taught the uſe of ſails, and having learned from obſerving the "bearing of the ſmoke and fires (of thoſe Vulcanian iſlands) what "winds would blow, he uſually foretold them with exactneſs ; and "from hence he is fabled to be the diſpoſer of the winds." The words of Varro, quoted by Servius, are to the ſame purpoſe: "Varro "autem dicit hunc inſularum regem fuiſſe, ex quarum nebulis & "fumo Vulcaniæ inſuliæ prædicens futura flabra ventorum, ab im- "peritis viſus eſt ventos ſuâ poteſtate retinere."

Polybius will not admit that this ſtory of Æolus is entirely fable ; and Strabo is of the ſame opinion, that Ulyſſes was in the Sicilian ſeas ; and that there was ſuch a king as Æolus, he affirms to be truth ; but that he met with ſuch adventures is, in the main, fiction. There may another reaſon, as Euſtathius obſerves, be given for the fiction of the binding up the winds in a bag : they who practiſed the art of incantation or charms, made uſe of the ſkin of a dolphin, and pretended by certain ceremonies to bind or looſe the winds as they pleaſed ; and this practice is a ſufficient ground to build upon in poetry.

The ſolution alſo of Bochart is worth our notice : Homer borrowed the word Αἴολος from the Phœnician Aol, which ſignifies a whirlwind or tempeſt, from whence the Greeks formed their word ἀελλὰ ; the Phœnicians obſerving the king of this iſland to be very expert in foretelling the winds, called him king Aolin, or king of the winds and ſtorms ; from hence Homer formed a proper name, and called him Αἴολος. It muſt be confeſſed, that this ſolution is ingenious, and not without an appearance of probability.

But having laid together what may be ſaid in vindication of this ſtory of Æolus : juſtice requires that I ſhould not ſuppreſs what has been objected againſt it by no leſs a critic than Longinus : he obſerves that a genius naturally lofty ſometimes falls into trifling ; an inſtance of this, adds he, is what Homer ſays of the bag wherein Æolus incloſed the winds. Cap. vii. περὶ ὑψους.

v. 3. *A floating iſle* ——] The word in the original is πλωτὴ : ſome take it, as Euſtathius remarks, for a proper name ; but Ariſtarchus believes Homer intended to expreſs it by a floating iſland, that was frequently removed by concuſſions and earthquakes, for it is ſeen ſometimes on the right, at other times on the left hand : the like has been ſaid of Delos ; and Herodotus thus deſcribes the iſland Echemis in the Ægyptian ſeas. Dionyſius, in his περιήγησις, affirms, that this iſland is not called by the name of πλωτὴ, by reaſon of its floating, but becauſe it is an iſland of fame, and much ſailed unto

At night each pair on ſplendid carpets lay,
And crown'd with love the pleaſures of the day.

or πλωτὴ by navigators; that is, πλεομένη, or ἐν τόποις πλεομένοις κειμένη, or lying in ſeas of great navigation: but perhaps the former opinion of Ariſtarchus may be preferable, as it beſt contributes to raiſe the wonder and admiration of the credulous ignorant Phæacians, which was the ſole intention of Ulyſſes.

Theſe iſlands were ſeven in number (but eleven at this day) Strongyle, Hiera, Didyme, Hiceſia, Lipara, Erycodes, and Phœnicodes, all lying in the Sicilian ſeas, as Diodorus Siculus teſtifies; but differs in the name of one of the iſlands.

Strabo is of opinion, that the iſland called by Homer the Æolian, is Strongyle; Ἡ δὲ Στρογγύλη, ἐςὶ διαπυρὸς, τῷ φέρειν πλειονακτοῦσα, ἐνταῦθα δὲ τὸν Αἴολον οἰκῆσαι φασὶ. "This iſland Strongyle abounds "with ſubterraneous fires, &c. and here Æolus is ſaid to have reigned." Pliny agrees with Strabo, lib. iii. but Dacier underſtands it to be Lipara, according to Virgil, Æn. lib viii. but in reality the ſeven were all called the Æolian iſlands.

"Inſula Sicanium juxta latus, Æoliamque
"Erigitur Liparen, fumantibus ardua ſaxis."

But why is it fabled to be ſurrounded with a wall of braſs? Euſtathius ſays, that this may proceed from its being almoſt inacceſſible; but this reaſon is not ſufficient to give foundation to ſuch a fiction. Dacier obſerves that it is thus deſcribed, becauſe of the ſubterranean fires, which from time to time break out from the entrails of this iſland. Ariſtotle ſpeaking of Lipara, which is the moſt conſiderable of the Æolian iſlands, thus deſcribes it; "all night long the iſland Lipara appears enlightened with fires." The ſame relation agrees with Strongyle, called Strombolo at this day.

I will take the liberty to propoſe a conjecture, which may perhaps not unhappily give a reaſon of this fiction of the wall of braſs, from this deſcription of Ariſtotle: all night fires appear (ſays that author) from this iſland, and theſe fires falling upon the ſeas, might caſt a ruddy reflection round the iſland, which to navigators might look like a wall of braſs incloſing it. This is but a conjecture drawn from appearances; but to write according to appearances is allowable in poetry, where a ſeeming or a real truth may be uſed indifferently.

v. 5. *Six blooming youths——and ſix fair daughters.*] Diodorus Siculus mentions the names of the ſix ſons of Æolus, but is ſilent concerning his daughters, and therefore others, who can find myſteries in the plaineſt deſcription, aſſure us, that this is not to be underſtood hiſtorically, but allegorically: Æolus repreſents the year, his twelve children are the twelve months, ſix of which are

This port affords our wand'ring fleet
A month's reception and a ſafe retreat.

female, to denote thoſe ſix months in which the earth brings forth her fruits; by his ſix ſons the other months are underſtood, in which the ſeed is ſown, or in which the herbs, fruits, &c. are nouriſhed in order to production; theſe may therefore be called males. But this is to darken an author into myſtery, not to explain him. Dacier gives us another allegorical interpretation: the poet makes him the governour of the winds, and gives him twelve children, theſe denote the twelve principal winds; half of which children are males, half females; the males denote the winter winds, which as it were brood upon the earth, and generate its increaſe; the females thoſe warmer ſeaſons of the year, when the more prolific winds blow, and make the earth teem with fruitfulneſs: theſe children of Æolus are in continual feaſts in his palace; that is, the winds are continually fed by the exhalations from the earth, which may be called their food or nouriſhment: the brothers and ſiſters intermarry; this denotes the nature of the winds, which blow promiſcuouſly, and one wind unites itſelf with another from all quarters of the world indifferently: the brothers and ſiſters are ſaid to ſleep by night together; that is, the winds are uſually ſtill and calm, and as it were reſt together, at that ſeaſon. But what occaſion is there to have recourſe to an uncertain allegory, when ſuch great names as Polybius, Strabo, and Diodorus aſſure us, that this relation is in part true hiſtory; and if there was really ſuch a king as Æolus, why might he not be a father of ſix ſons and as many daughters? I ſhould prefer a plain hiſtory to a dark allegory.

v. 9. *All day they feaſt——*
——and muſic thro' the iſle reſounds.]

Homer was not unacquainted with the wonders related of this iſland of Lipara. "In this iſland, ſays Ariſtotle, a monument is reported "to be, of which they tell miracles: they aſſure us that they hear "iſſuing from it the ſound of timbrels or cymbals plainly and diſtinctly." It is eaſy to perceive that this is founded upon the noiſe the fires make which are incloſed in the caverns in this iſland, and that Homer alludes to the ancient name of it, which in the Phæacian language (Meloginin, as Bochart obſerves) ſignifies the land of thoſe who play upon inſtruments. We learn from Callimachus, in his hymn to Diana, that Lipara was originally called Meligounis. "She "(Diana) went to find out the Cyclops: ſhe found them in Lipara, "for that is the name the iſle now bears, but anciently it was "called Meligounis; they were labouring a huge maſs of red-hot "iron, &c." So that Homer is not all invention, but adapts his poetry to tradition and ancient ſtory. Dacier.

Full oft' the monarch urg'd me to relate
The fall of Ilion, and the Grecian fate;
Full oft' I told: at length for parting mov'd;
The king with mighty gifts my ſuit approv'd.
The adverſe winds in leathern bags he brac'd,
Compreſs'd their force, and lock'd each ſtruggling blaſt:
For him the mighty ſire of Gods aſſign'd
The tempeſt's lord, the tyrant of the wind;
His word alone the liſt'ning ſtorms obey,
To ſmooth the deep, or ſwell the foamy ſea.
Theſe in my hollow ſhip the monarch hung,
Securely fetter'd by a ſilver thong;
But Zephyrus exempt, with friendly gales
He charg'd to fill, and guide the ſwelling ſails:
Rare gift! but oh, what gift to fools avails!
Nine proſp'rous days we ply'd the lab'ring oar;
The tenth preſents our welcome native ſhore:
The hills diſplay the beacon's friendly light,
And riſing mountains gain upon our ſight.

v. 32. *The hill's diſplay the beacon's friendly light.*] Euſtathius obſerves, that theſe fires were a kind of beacons kept continually burning to direct navigators; the ſmoke gave notice by day, the light of the flame by night. Ithaca was inviroued with rocks, and conſequently there was a neceſſity for this care, to guide ſeafaring men to avoid thoſe rocks, and to point out the places of landing with ſecurity.

But is it not an imputation to the wiſdom of Ulyſſes, to ſuffer himſelf to be ſurpriſed with ſleep when he was almoſt ready to enter the ports of his own country? And is it not probable that the joy he muſt be ſuppoſed to receive at the ſight of it, ſhould induce him to a few hours watchfulneſs? It is eaſier to defend his ſleeping here, than in the thirteenth of the Odyſſey: the poet very judiciouſly tells us, that Ulyſſes for nine days together almoſt continually waked and took charge of the veſſel, and the word κεκμηῶτα ſhews that nature was wearied out, and that he fell into an involuntary repoſe; it can therefore be no diminution to his character to be forced to yield to the calls of nature, any more than it is to be hungry: his prudence and love of his country ſufficiently appear from the care he took through the ſpace of nine days to arrive at it; ſo that this circumſtance muſt be imputed to the infirmity of human nature, and not to a defect of care or wiſdom in Ulyſſes.

Then firſt my eyes, by watchful toils oppreſt,
Comply'd to take the balmy gifts of reſt;
Then firſt my hands did from the rudder part,
(So much the love of home poſſeſs'd my heart)
When lo! on board a fond debate aroſe;
What rare device thoſe veſſels might incloſe?
What ſum, what prize from Æolus I brought?
Whilſt to his neighbour each expreſs'd his thought.
Say, whence, ye gods, contending nations ſtrive
Who moſt ſhall pleaſe, who moſt our hero give?
Long have his coffers groan'd with Trojan ſpoils;
Whilſt we, the wretched partners of his toils,
Reproach'd by want, our fruitleſs labours mourn,
And only rich in barren fame return.
Now Æolus, ye ſee, augments his ſtore:
But come my friends, theſe myſtic gifts explore.
They ſaid: and (oh curs'd fate!) the thongs unbound!
The guſhing tempeſt ſweeps the ocean round;
Snatch'd in the whirl, the hurried navy flew,
The ocean widen'd, and the ſhores withdrew.

v. 50. *They ſaid: and (oh curs'd fate!) the thongs unbound.*] This relation has been blamed as improbable; what occaſion was there to unbind the bag, when theſe companions of Ulyſſes might have ſatisfied their curioſity that there was no treaſure in it, from the lightneſs of it? But Homer himſelf obviates this objection, by telling us that Æolus faſtened it in the veſſel, as Euſtathius obſerves,

Νηῒ δ' ἐνὶ γλυφυῇ κατέδει ———

Boſſu gives the moral of this fable or allegory, cap. x. lib. i. By the winds incloſed in the bag, into which the companions of Ulyſſes were ſo unwiſe as to pry, is to be underſtood, that we ought not to intrude into thoſe myſteries of government which the prince intends to keep ſecret: the tempeſts and confuſions raiſed by the looſing the winds, repreſents the miſchiefs and diſorders that ariſe from ſuch a vain curioſity in the ſubject: a wiſe people permit the winds to reſt without moleſtation, and ſatisfy themſelves with thoſe that the prince is pleaſed to releaſe, and believe them to be the moſt proper and uſeful. But whatever judgment is paſſed upon this explication, it is certainly an inſtance of the ill conſequences of avarice, and unſeaſonable curioſity.

Rous'd from my fatal ſleep, I long debate
If ſtill to live, or deſp'rate plunge to fate:
Thus doubting, proſtrate on the deck I lay,
'Till all the coward thoughts of death gave way.
Meanwhile our veſſels plough the liquid plain,
And ſoon the known Ætolian coaſt regain,
Our groans the rocks remurmur'd to the main.
We leap'd on ſhore, and with a ſcanty feaſt
Our thirſt and hunger haſtily repreſs'd;
That done, two choſen heralds ſtraight attend
Our ſecond progreſs to my royal friend:
And him amidſt his jovial ſons we found;
The banquet ſtreaming, and the goblets crown'd:
There humbly ſtopp'd with conſcious ſhame and awe,
Nor nearer than the gate preſum'd to draw.
But ſoon his ſons their well-known gueſt deſcry'd,
And ſtarting from their couches loudly cry'd,
Ulyſſes here! what dæmon cou'dſt thou meet
To thwart thy paſſage, and repel thy fleet?
Waſt thou not furniſh'd by our choiceſt care
For Greece, for home, and all thy ſoul held dear?
Thus they: in ſilence long my fate I mourn'd,
At length theſe words with accent low return'd.
Me, lock'd in ſleep, my faithleſs crew bereft
Of all the bleſſings of your god like gift!
But grant, oh grant our loſs we may retrieve:
A favour you, and you alone can give.

v. 55. *If ſtill to live, or deſp'rate plunge to fate.*] We ought not to infer from this paſſage, that Homer thought a perſon might lawfully take away his own life to avoid the greateſt dangers; what Ulyſſes here ſpeaks ariſes from the violence of a ſudden paſſion, and gives us a true picture of human nature: the wiſeſt of men are not free from the infirmity of paſſion, but reaſon corrects and ſubdues it. This is the caſe in the inſtance before us; Ulyſſes has ſo much of the man in him as to be liable to the paſſion of man; but ſo much virtue and wiſdom as to reſtrain and govern it.

Thus I with art to move their pity try'd,
And touch'd the youths; but their ſtern ſire reply'd,
Vile wretch, be gone! this inſtant I command
Thy fleet accurs'd to leave our hallow'd land.
His baneful ſuit pollutes theſe bleſs'd abodes,
Whoſe fate proclaims him hateful to the gods.
Thus fierce he ſaid: we ſighing went our way,
And with deſponding hearts put off to ſea.
The ſailors ſpent with toils their folly mourn,
But mourn in vain; no proſpect of return.
Six days and nights a doubtful courſe we ſteer,
The next proud Lamos' ſtately tow'rs appear,
And Læſtrigonia's gates ariſe diſtinct in air.
The ſhepherd quitting here at night the plain,
Calls, to ſucceed his cares, the watchful ſwain;

v. 83. *Vile wretch, begone!* ———] This inhoſpitable character of Æolus may ſeem contrary to the humane diſpoſition which Homer before aſcribed to him; he therefore tells us, that Ulyſſes appeared to him to be an object of divine vengeance, and that to give him aſſiſtance would be to act againſt the will of the gods. But, obſerves Euſtathius, is not this an ill choſen relation to be made to the Phæacians, as the critics have remarked, and might it not deter them from aſſiſting a man whom Æolus had rejected as an enemy to the gods? He anſwers, that it was evident to the Phæacians that Ulyſſes was no longer under the diſpleaſure of heaven, that the imprecations of Polypheme were fulfilled; he being to be tranſported to his own country by ſtrangers, according to his prayer in the ninth of the Odyſſey, and conſequently the Phæacians have nothing to fear from the aſſiſtance which they lend Ulyſſes.

v. 94. *The ſhepherd quitting here at night the plain*, &c.] This paſſage has been thought to be very difficult; but Euſtathius makes it intelligible: the land of the Læſtrigons was fruitful, and fit for paſturage; it was the practice to tend the ſheep by day, and the oxen by night; for it was infeſted by a kind of fly that was very grievous to the oxen by day, whereas the wool of the ſheep defended them from it: and therefore the ſhepherds drove their oxen to paſture by night. If the ſame ſhepherd who watched the ſheep by day, could paſs the night without ſleep, and attend the oxen, he performed a double duty, and conſequently merited a double reward. Homer ſays, that the ways of the night and day were near to each other, that is, the paſtures of the ſheep and oxen, and the ways that led to them, were adjacent; for the

But he that ſcorns the chains of ſleep to wear,
And adds the herdſman's to the ſhepherd's care,

ſhepherd that drove his flocks home (or εἰσελάων, as Homer expreſſes it) could call to the herdſman, who drove his herds to paſture, or ἐξελάων, and be heard with eaſe, and therefore the roads muſt be adjoining.

Crates gives us a very different interpretation: he aſſerts that Homer intended to expreſs the ſituation of the Læſtrigons, and affirms that they lay under the head of the dragon, Κεφαλὴν δράκοντος (which Dacier renders the tail of the dragon) according to Aratus,

——— ἔχιπερ (κεφαλῇ) ἄκραι
Μίσγονται δύσιες, ἠὲ ἀναίολαι ἀλλήλῃσιν.

which Tully thus tranſlates,

"Hoc caput hic paullum ſeſe ſubitoque recondit
"Ortus ubi atque obitus partem admiſcentur in unam."

If this be true, the poet intended to expreſs that there was ſcarce any night at all among the Læſtrigons, according to that of Manilius

"Vixque ortus, occaſus erit"———

But how will this agree with the ſituation of the Læſtrigons, who were undoubtedly Sicilians, according to the direct affirmation of Thucydides, lib vi. of his hiſtory? Beſides, if Læſtrigonia lay under the head of the dragon. Ulyſſes muſt have ſpent ſeven months inſtead of ſeven days, in ſailing from the Æolian iſlands to that country. Neither is there any neceſſity to have recourſe to this ſolution; for what ſignifies the length or ſhortneſs of the day to the double wages of the ſhepherds, when it was paid to him who took upon him a double charge of watching the whole day and night, which comprehends the ſpace of four and twenty hours; which alone, whether the greateſt part of it was by night or day, entitled the ſhepherd to a double reward? I therefore ſhould rather chuſe the former interpretation, with which Didymus agrees, Νυκτέριναὶ, καὶ ἡμέριναὶ νομαὶ ἐγγὺς εἰσὶ τῆς πόλεως; that is, "both the night paſtures, and thoſe of the "day, are adjacent to the city."

It is evident that the Læſtrigons alſo inhabited Formiæ, a city of Campania near Cajeta: thus Horace, lib. iii. ode 17.

"Æli vetuſto nobilis ab Lamo———
"Auctore ab illo ducit originem
"Qui Formiarum mœnia dicitur
"Princeps"———

It was called Hormiæ, according to Strabo, Φορμίαι, Ἀαχαϊκὸν κτίσμα, Ὁρμίαι λεγόμενον διὰ τὸ εὔορμον; that is, Formiæ was

So near the paſtures, and ſo ſhort the way,
His double toils may claim a double pay,
And join the labours of the night and day.
Within a long receſs a bay there lies,
Edg'd round with cliffs, high pointing to the ſkies;
The jutting ſhores that ſwell on either ſide
Contract its mouth, and break the ruſhing tide.
Our eager ſailors ſeize the fair retreat,
And bound within the port their crowded fleet:
For here retir'd the ſinking billows ſleep,
And ſmiling calmneſs ſilver'd o'er the deep.
I only in the bay refus'd to moor,
And fix'd, without, my halſers to the ſhore.

" built by a Laconian, called alſo Hormiæ, from its being an excel-
" lent ſtation for ſhips." Tully had this place in view in his epiſtle to Atticus, lib ii. epiſt. 13. " Si vero in hanc τηλέπυλον, veneris
" λαιστρυγονίην, Formias dico." And Pliny to the ſame purpoſe, lib. iii. cap. 5. " Oppidum Formiæ, Hormiæ ante dictum, ut exiſtima-
" vêre, antiqua Læſtrigonum ſedes." But how will this agree with Homer, who places them in Sicily, whilſt Tully and Pliny place them in Campania in Italy?

Dacier anſwers, that they were originally Sicilians, as appears from Pliny, lib. iii. cap. 8. " Flumina, Symæthus, Terias; intus, Læ-
" ſtrigonii campi; oppidum, Leontini." And why might not theſe Læſtrigons, or a colony of them, leave Sicily to ſettle in Italy, as it is evident the Phæacians had done, and fixed in Corcyra? Bochart's opinion concerning this nation is not to be neglected; the words Læſtrigons and Leontines are of the ſame import; Læſtrigon is a Phœnician name, " Lais tircam," that is, " a devouring lion;" this is rendered literally by the Latin word leontinum, and both denote the ſavage and leonine diſpoſition of this people; the word lamus is alſo of Phœnician extract: Laham, or lahama, ſignifies a devourer; from hence probably was derived that lamia, who devoured young infants, mentioned by Horace in his Art of Poetry.

" Nec pranſæ lamiæ vivum puerum extrahant alvo."

We are informed that there was a queen of Lybia of that name by Diodorus Siculus; ſhe was a perſon of great beauty, but of great barbarity.

v. 109. *I only in the bay refus'd to moor.*] It may appear at the firſt view, that Ulyſſes took more care of himſelf than of his companions; and it may be aſked, why did he not reſtrain them from

From thence we climb'd a point, whoſe airy brow
Commands the proſpect of the plains below:
No tracks of beaſts, or ſigns of men we found,
But ſmoky volumes rolling from the ground.
Two with our herald thither we command,
With ſpeed to learn what men poſſeſs'd the land.
They went, and kept the wheel's ſmooth beaten road
Which to the city drew the mountain wood;
When lo! they met, beſide a cryſtal ſpring,
The daughter of Antiphates the king;

entering the bay, when his caution plainly ſhews that he was apprehenſive of danger? Had he more fear than the reſt of the company? No; but a greater foreſight; a wiſe man provides as far as lies within his power againſt all contingencies, and the event ſhews, that his companions were raſh, and he wiſe to act with ſo much circumſpection; they ſtayed not for command, and therefore were juſtly puniſhed for acting precipitately without the direction of their general and king.

v. 120. *The daughter of Antiphates*, &c.] It is not evident from whence Ulyſſes had the knowledge of theſe particulars; the perſons whom he ſent to ſearch the land periſhed in the attempt, or were deſtroyed by the Læſtrigons: how then could this relation be made to Ulyſſes? It is probable that he had his information from Circe or Calypſo, for Circe in the ſequel of the Odyſſey tells Ulyſſes that ſhe was acquainted with all the ſufferings that he had undergone by ſea; and if ſhe, as a goddeſs, knew his adventures, why might ſhe not relate to him theſe particulars? Homer a little lower tells us, that the Læſtrigons transfixed (περίρουλες) the companions of Ulyſſes, and then carried them away on their weapons like ſo many fiſhes; others prefer ἐίρουλες, that is, connecting them together like a range of fiſhes; both which very well expreſs the prodigious ſtrength of theſe giants: others chuſe the word ἀσπαίρουλας, or, "they eat them yet alive (palpitantes) like fiſhes." The preference is ſubmitted to the reader. Euſtathius.

I will only add, that poſſibly the relation of the barbarity of Polypheme and Antiphates, with reſpect to their eating the fleſh of men, may not be intirely fabulous: modern hiſtory aſſures us that ſavages have been found in parts of the world lately diſcovered, who eat the bodies of their enemies: it is therefore no wonder that the more polite and civilized nations of antiquity looked upon ſuch men as monſters, and that their poets painted them as ſuch, or perhaps aggravated the fierté, or fierceneſs of their features, ſtruck with horrour at their brutal inhumanity.

She to Artacia's ſilver ſtreams came down,
(Artacia's ſtreams alone ſupply the town :)
The damſel they approach, and aſk'd what race
The people were ? who monarch of the place ?
With joy the maid th' unwary ſtrangers heard,
And ſhew'd them where the royal dome appear'd.
They went ; but as they ent'ring ſaw the queen
Of ſize enormous and terrific mien,
(Not yielding to ſome bulky mountain's height)
A ſudden horrour ſtruck their aking ſight.
Swift at her call her huſband ſcour'd away
To wreak his hunger on the deſtin'd prey ;
One for his food the raging glutton ſlew,
But two ruſh'd out and to the navy flew.
Balk'd of his prey the yelling monſter flies,
And fills the city with his hideous cries ;
A ghaſtly band of giants hear the roar,
And pouring down the mountains, croud the ſhore.
Fragments they rend from off the craggy brow,
And daſh the ruins on the ſhips below :
The crackling veſſels burſt; hoarſe groans ariſe,
And mingled horrours echo to the ſkies ;
The men, like fiſh, they ſtuck upon the flood,
And cram'd their filthy throats with human food.
Whilſt thus their fury rages at the bay,
My ſword our cables cut, I call'd to weigh ;
And charg'd my men, as they from fate would fly,
Each nerve to ſtrain, each bending oar to ply.
The ſailors catch the word, their oars they ſeize,
And ſweep with equal ſtrokes the ſmoky ſeas ;
Clear of the rocks th' impatient veſſel flies ;
Whilſt in the port each wretch encumber'd dies.
With earneſt haſte my frighted ſailors preſs,
While kindling tranſports glow'd at our ſucceſs ;
But the ſad fate that did our friends deſtroy,
Cool'd ev'ry breaſt, and damp'd the riſing joy.

Now dropp'd our anchors in th' Ææan bay,
Where Circe dwelt, the daughter of the day;
Her mother Persè, of old ocean's ſtrain,
Thus from the ſun deſcended, and the main;
(From the ſame lineage ſtern Æætes came,
The far-fam'd brother of th' enchantreſs dame)
Goddeſs, and queen, to whom the pow'rs belong
Of dreadful magic, and commanding ſong.
Some god directing, to this peaceful bay
Silent we came, and melancholy lay,

v. 158. *Where Circe dwelt* ———] Heſiod in his Theogony agrees with Homer as to the genealogy of Circe and Æætes.

Ἠελίῳ δ' ἀκάμαντι τέκε κλυτὴ ὠκεανίνη
Περσηὶς, Κίρκην τε καὶ Αἰήτην βασιλῆα.

That is, "Perſeis the daughter of Oceanus bore to Phœbus, Circe "and king Æætes." But why are they fabled to be the offspring of the ſun? Euſtathius anſwers, either from their high birth, as the great perſonages of antiquity were called Διοσδεῖς, or the ſons of Jupiter, and the ſun in the ancient mythology repreſented that deity; or from their extraordinary beauty, which might be compared to the ſun, or from their illuſtrious actions. But perhaps the whole might be derived from the way of ſpeaking among the orientals; at this day we are informed from the beſt hiſtorians, that ſuch language prevails in the eaſtern countries, and kings and great perſonages are called the brothers or offſpring of the ſun.

This Ææa is a mountain or promontory in Italy: perhaps originally an iſland, and ſtill keeping the reſemblance of it. Thus Procopius. Gothicorum, lib. i. "Circeium haud modico tractu in mare porrectum "inſulæ ſpeciem fert, tam prætervigantibus quam terreſtri itinere "prætereuntibus: and Strabo, lib. v. Κιρκαῖον ὄρος νησιάζον θαλάττῃ τε καὶ ἕλεσι. But is the relation that Homer makes of this iſland, and of Circe, agreeable to truth? Undoubtedly it is not; but Homer was very well acquainted with the ſtory of Medea, and applies what was reported of that enchantreſs to Circe, and gives the name of Ææa to the iſland of Circe, in reſemblance to Æa, a city of Colchos, the country of Medea and Æætes. That Homer was not a ſtranger to the ſtory of Medea is evident, for he mentions the ſhip Argo in the twelfth Odyſſey, in which Jaſon ſailed to Colchos, where Medea fell in love with him; ſo that though Circe be a fabled deity, yet what Homer ſays of her, was applicable to the character of another perſon, and conſequently a juſt foundation for a ſtory in poetry. With this opinion Strabo agrees.

Spent and o'erwatch'd. Two days and nights roll'd on,
And now the third ſucceeding morning ſhone,
I climb'd a cliff, with ſpear and ſword in hand,
Whoſe ridge o'erlook'd a ſhady length of land;
To learn if aught of mortal works appear,
Or chearful voice of mortal ſtrike the ear.
From the high point I mark'd, in diſtant view,
A ſtream of curling ſmoke, aſcending blue,
And ſpiry tops, the tufted trees above,
Of Circe's palace boſom'd in the grove.
Thither to haſte, the region to explore,
Was firſt my thought: but ſpeeding back to ſhore
I deem'd it beſt to viſit firſt my crew,
And ſend out ſpies the dubious coaſt to view.
As down the hill I ſolitary go,
Some pow'r divine who pities human woe,
Sent a tall ſtag, deſcending from the wood,
To cool his fervour in the cryſtal flood;
Luxuriant on the wave-worn bank he lay,
Stretch'd forth, and panting in the ſunny ray.

v. 169 *I climb'd a cliff*——] Scaliger, lib. v. of his Poetics, obſerves, that there is a general reſemblance between Ulyſſes in Homer, and Æneas in Virgil, and that Æneas acts in the ſame manner as Ulyſſes.

" ——— exire, locoſque
" Explorare novos, quas vento acceſſerit oras,
" Qui teneant, (nam inculta videt) hominesne feræne
" Quærere conſtituit."

That critic remarks, that though the attitudes of the two heroes are the ſame, yet they are drawn by Virgil with a more maſterly hand: " Fuſior & latior Homerus invenietur, pictior Virgilius & numeris " aſtrictior."

Ulyſſes himſelf here takes a general view of the iſland, but ſends his companions for a more particular information; this was neceſſary to introduce the following ſtory, and give it an air of probability; if he had made the experiment in his own perſon, his virtue would have been proof againſt the ſorceries of Circe, and conſequently there could not have been room for a deſcription of her enchantments. Euſtathius.

I lanch'd my ſpear, and with a ſudden wound
Tranſpierc'd his back, and fix'd him to the ground.
He falls, and mourns his fate with human cries:
Thro' the wide wound the vital ſpirit flies.
I drew, and caſting on the river ſide
The bloody ſpear, his gather'd feet I ty'd
With twining oſiers, which the bank ſupply'd.
An ell in length the pliant wiſp I weav'd,
And the huge body on my ſhoulders heav'd:
Then leaning on the ſpear with both my hands,
Up bore my load, and preſs'd the ſinking ſands
With weighty ſteps, 'till at the ſhip I threw
The welcome burden, and beſpoke my crew.
Chear up, my friends! it is not yet our fate
To glide with ghoſts thro' Pluto's gloomy gate.
Food in the deſert land, behold! is giv'n,
Live, and enjoy the providence of heav'n.
The joyful crew ſurvey his mighty ſize,
And on the future banquet feaſt their eyes,
As huge in length extended lay the beaſt;
Then waſh their hands, and haſten to the feaſt.
There, 'till the ſetting ſun roll'd down the light,
They ſat indulging in the genial rite.
When ev'ning roſe, and darkneſs cover'd o'er
The face of things, we ſlept along the ſhore.
But when the roſy morning warm'd the eaſt,
My men I ſummon'd, and theſe words addreſt.
Followers and friends? attend what I propoſe:
Ye ſad companions of Ulyſſes' woes!
We know not here what land before us lies,
Or to what quarter now we turn our eyes,
Or where the ſun ſhall ſet, or where ſhall riſe.

v. 218. *Or where the ſun ſhall ſet, or where ſhall riſe.*] The interpretations of this paſſage are various; ſome, ſays Euſtathius, judge theſe words not to proceed from the ignorance of Ulyſſes, but that they are the language of deſpair ſuggeſted by his continual

Here let us think (if thinking be not vain)
If any counſel, any hope remain.
Alas! from yonder promontory's brow,
I view'd the coaſt, a region flat and low;

calamities: for how could Ulyſſes be ignorant of the eaſt or weſt, when he ſaw the ſun riſe and ſet every day? Others underſtand it to ſignify, that he was ignorant of the clime of the world (ὅτῃ κεστμικῷ κλίματος) in which this iſland lay. Strabo was of opinion, that the appearance of the heavenly bodies, as the ſtars, &c. were different in this iſland from the poſition which he had ever before obſerved in any country, and therefore he might well confeſs his ignorance, and expreſs his concern for his almoſt deſperate condition. He underſtands by ἠὼς all that region through which the ſun paſſes oppoſite to the north. It is true, that the four quarters of the world may be ſuppoſed to be here mentioned by Ulyſſes, ἠὼς may expreſs the ſouthern parts through which the ſun paſſes, and ζόφος the oppoſite quarter, which may be ſaid comparatively to be ζόφος, or dark? And then the riſing and ſetting of the ſun will undeniably denote the eaſtern and weſtern regions. Spondanus is of opinion, that Homer intended to expreſs the four quarters of the world, otherwiſe the ſecond verſe is a tautology. Dacier calls it an explication of the firſt deſcription. And indeed the mind of man is apt to dwell long upon any object, by which it is deeply affected, as Ulyſſes muſt here be ſuppoſed to be, and therefore he might enlarge upon the ſentiment advanced in the former line. The meaning then will be this. I know not, ſays that hero, where this iſland lies, whether eaſt or weſt, where the ſun riſes, or where he ſets. I ſhould therefore underſtand Ulyſſes to mean, that he knows not how the iſland lies with reſpect to the reſt of the world, and eſpecially to Ithaca his own country. This is evident from his conduct when he ſailed from Formiæ the land of the Læſtrigons; for inſtead of making toward the eaſt where Ithaca lay, he bore to this iſland of Circe, which lies on the weſt of Formiæ.

v. 220. *If any counſel, any hope remain.*] This expreſſion may be thought unworthy of the mouth of a hero, and ſerve only to cauſe his companions to deſpair; but in reality it has a double effect; it gives us a lively picture of human nature, which in the greateſt men will ſhew ſome degrees of ſenſibility, and at the ſame time it arms his friends againſt ſurpriſe, and ſets the danger they are in full before their eyes, that they may proceed with due circumſpection. We do not find that Ulyſſes abandons himſelf to deſpair, he ſtill acts like a brave man, but joins wiſdom with bravery, and proceeds at once with the caution of a philoſopher, and the ſpirit of a hero.

An iſle incircled with the boundleſs flood;
A length of thickets, and entangled wood.
Some ſmoke I ſaw amid the foreſt riſe,
And all around it only ſeas and ſkies!
With broken hearts my ſad companions ſtood,
Mindful of Cyclops and his human food,
And horrid Læſtrigons, the men of blood.
Preſaging tears apace began to rain;
But tears in mortal miſeries are vain.
In equal parts I ſtraight divide my band,
And name a chief each party to command;
I led the one, and of the other ſide
Appointed brave Eurylochus the guide.
Then in the brazen helm the lots we throw,
And fortune caſts Eurylochus to go:
He march'd, with twice eleven in his train:
Penſive they march, and penſive we remain.
The palace in a woody vale they found,
High rais'd of ſtone; a ſhaded ſpace around:

v. 236. *Then in the brazen helm the lots we threw.*] Dacier is of opinion that Ulyſſes caſts lots out of an apprehenſion of being diſobeyed if he had given poſitive commands; his companions being ſo greatly diſcouraged by the adventures of Polypheme and the Læſtrigons. It will be a nobler reaſon, and more worthy of a hero to ſay, that Ulyſſes was ſo far from declining a common danger, that he ſubmits himſelf to an equal chance with his companions to undertake it. This expedition appeared very hazardous, and if he had directly commanded a ſelect number of his men to attempt it, they might have thought he had expoſed them to almoſt certain deſtruction; but the contrary conduct takes away this apprehenſion, and at the ſame time ſhews the bravery of Ulyſſes, who puts himſelf upon a level with the meaneſt of his ſoldiers, and is ready to expoſe his perſon to an equality of danger.

Ulyſſes divides his men into two bodies: each contains two and twenty men: this is agreeable, obſerves Euſtathius, to the former account of Homer; each veſſel carried fifty men, ſix out of every one were deſtroyed by the Ciconians, and therefore fortyfour is the exact number, incluſive of himſelf and the ſurviving company.

Where mountain wolves and brindled lions roam,
(By magic tam'd) familiar to the dome.

v. 242. *Where mountain wolves and brindled lions*, &c.] Virgil has borrowed almoſt this whole deſcription of Circe, and, as Scaliger judges, perhaps with good reaſon, greatly improved it.

" Hanc exaudiri gemitus iræque leonum
" Vincla recuſantum, & ſerâ ſub nocte rudentum,
" Setigerique ſues, atque in præſepibus urſi, &c."

From hence we heard rebellowing from the main,
The roars of lions that refuſe the chain,
The grunts of briſtled boars, and groans of bears,
And herds of howling wolves that ſtun the ſailors ears:
Theſe from their caverns, at the cloſe of night,
Fill the ſad iſle with horrour and affright:
Darkling they mourn their fate, whom Circe's pow'r,
That watch'd the moon, and planetary hour,
With words and wicked herbs, from human kind
Had alter'd, and in brutal ſhapes confin'd. DRYDEN.

It muſt be confeſſed, that " Iræ leonum vincla recuſantum," and the epithet and ſhort deſcriptions adapted to the nature of each ſavage, are beautiful additions. Virgil likewiſe differs from Homer in the manner of the deſcription: Homer draws the beaſts with a gentleneſs of nature; Virgil paints them with the fierceneſs of ſavages. The reaſon of Homer's conduct is, becauſe they ſtill retained the ſentiments of men, in the forms of beaſts, and conſequently their native tenderneſs.

There is a beautiful moral couched under this fable or allegory: Homer intended to teach, as Euſtathius remarks, that pleaſure and ſenſuality debaſe men into beaſts. Thus Socrates underſtood it, as Xenophon informs us. Perhaps, adds Dacier by the fawning wolves and lions that guard the portals of Circe's palace, the poet means to repreſent the attendants of ſuch houſes of debauchery, which appear gentle and courteous, but are in reality of a brutal diſpoſition, and more dangerous than lions. But upon what foundation is this fable built? Many writers inform us, that Circe was a famous courtezan, and that her beauty drew her admirers as it were by enchantment. Thus Horace writes,

" ——— Circes pocula noſti,
" Quæ ſi cum ſociis ſtultus, cupiduſque bibiſſet,
" Sub dominâ Meretrice fuiſſet turpis & excors,
" Vixiſſet canis immundus, vel amica luto ſus."

It is evident that Ulyſſes had a very intimate commerce with Circe; for Heſiod writes that he had two ſons by her, Agrius and Latinus,

With gentle blandiſhment our men they meet,
And wag their tails, and fawning lick their feet.

who afterwards reigned in Tuſcany; other authors call them Nauſithous and Telegonus.

> Κίρκη δ' Ἠελίου θυγάτηρ ὑπεριονίδαο
> Γείνατ' Ὀδυσσῆος ταλισίφρονος ἐν φιλότητι
> Ἄγριον, ἠδὲ Λατῖνον.

Dionyſius Halicarnaſſus and Ariſtotle mention Telegonus as the ſon of Circe and Ulyſſes, who afterwards ſlew his father with the bone of a fiſh inadvertently. Thus Horace,

> "Telegoni juga parricidæ."

But then is not this intrigue a breach of morality, and conjugal fidelity in that hero? I refer the reader to note on v. 198, of the fifth book of the Odyſſey: I ſhall only add, that the notions of morality are now very different from what they were in former ages. Adultery alone was eſteemed criminal, and puniſhed with death by the ancient heathens: concubinage was not only permitted, but thought to be honourable, as appears from the practice not only of heroes but even of the pagan deities; and conſequently this was the vice of the age, not in particular of Ulyſſes. But there is a ſtronger objection againſt Ulyſſes, and it may be aſked, how is he to be vindicated for waſting no leſs ſpace than a whole year in dalliance with a harlot? Penelope and his country ſeem both forgotten, and conſequently he appears to neglect his own re-eſtabliſhment, the chief deſign of the Odyſſey: what adds ſome weight to this obſervation is, that his companions ſeem more ſenſible of his long abſence from his country, and regret it more than that hero; for they awake him out of his dream, and intreat him to depart from the iſland. It is therefore neceſſary to take away this objection: for if it be unanſwerable, Ulyſſes is guilty of all the miſeries of his family and country, by neglecting to redreſs them by returning, and therefore he muſt ceaſe to be a hero, and is no longer to be propoſed as a pattern of wiſdom and imitation, as he is in the opening of the Odyſſey. But the ſtay of Ulyſſes is involuntary, and conſequently irreproachable; he is in the power of a deity, and therefore not capable of departing without her permiſſion: this is evident: for upon the remonſtrance made by his companions, he dares not undertake his voyage without her diſmiſſion. His aſking conſent plainly ſhews that it was not ſafe, if practicable, to go away without it; if he had been a free agent, her leave had been unneceſſary: it is true, ſhe tells him ſhe will not detain him any longer againſt his inclinations; but this does not imply that his ſtay till then had been voluntary, or that he never had

As from ſome feaſt a man returning late,
His faithful dogs all meet him at the gate,
Rejoicing round, ſome morſel to receive,
(Such as the good man ever us'd to give.)
Domeſtic thus the griſly beaſts drew near;
They gaze with wonder, not unmix'd with fear.
Now on the threſhold of the dome they ſtood,
And heard a voice reſounding thro' the wood:
Plac'd at her loom within, the goddeſs ſung;
The vaulted roofs and ſolid pavement rung.
O'er the fair web the riſing figures ſhine,
Immortal labour! worthy hands divine.
Polites to the reſt the queſtion mov'd,
(A gallant leader, and a man I lov'd.)
What voice celeſtial, chanting to the loom
(Or nymph, or goddeſs) echoes from the room?
Say ſhall we ſeek acceſs? With that they call;
And wide unfold the portals of the hall.
The goddeſs riſing, aſks her gueſts to ſtay,
Who blindly follow where ſhe leads the way.

intreated to be diſmiſſed before, but rather intimates the contrary: it only ſhews that now at laſt ſhe is willing he ſhould go away. But why ſhou'd Ulyſſes ſtand in need of being admoniſhed by his companions? Does not this imply that he was unmindful of returning? This is only an evidence that they were deſirous to return as well as he; but he makes a wiſe uſe of their impatience, and takes an occaſion from their importunities to preſs for an immediate diſmiſſion.

In ſhort, I am not pleading for perfection in the character of Ulyſſes: human nature allows it not, and therefore it is not to be aſcribed to it in poetry. But if Ulyſſes were here guilty, his character ceaſes to be of a piece: we no longer intereſt ourſelves in his misfortunes, ſince they are all owing to his own folly: the nature of the poem requires, that he ſhould be continually endeavouring to reſtore his affairs: if then he be here ſunk into a lethargy, his character is at once loſt, his calamities are a juſt puniſhment, and the moral of the Odyſſey is deſtroyed, which is to ſhew wiſdom and virtue rewarded, and vice and folly puniſhed by the death of the ſuitors, and re-eſtabliſhment of Ulyſſes.

Eurylochus alone of all the band,
Suſpecting fraud, more prudently remain'd.
On thrones around with downy cov'rings grac'd,
With ſemblance fair th' unhappy men ſhe plac'd.
Milk newly preſs'd, the ſacred flour of wheat,
And honey freſh, and Pramnian wines the treat:
But venom'd was the bread, and mix'd the bowl,
With drugs of force to darken all the ſoul:

v. 272. *But venom'd was the bread and mix'd the bowl.*] It is an undoubted truth, that Homer aſcribes more power to theſe magical drugs and incantations than they have in reality; but we are to remember that he is ſpeaking before a credulous audience, who readily believed theſe improbabilities, and at the ſame time he very judiciouſly provides for the ſatisfaction of his more underſtanding readers, by couching an excellent moral under his fables, viz. that by indulging our appetites we ſink below the dignity of human nature, and degenerate into brutality.

I am not in the number of thoſe who believe that there never were any magicians who performed things of an uncommon nature: the ſtory of Jannes and Jambres, of the witch of Endor, and Simon Magus, are undeniable inſtances of the contrary. Magic is ſuppoſed to have been firſt practiſed in Ægypt, and to have ſpread afterwards among the Chaldæans: it is very evident that Homer had been in Ægypt, where he might hear an account of the wonders performed by it. Dacier is of opinion, that theſe deluders, or magicians, were mimics of the real miracles of Moſes, and that they are deſcribed with a wand, in imitation of that great prophet

But if any perſon thinks that magic is mere fable, and never had any exiſtence, yet eſtabliſhed fame and common opinion juſtify a poet for uſing it. What has been more ridiculed than the winds being incloſed in a bag by Æolus, and committed to Ulyſſes? But as abſurd as this appears, more countries than Lapland pretend to the power of ſelling a ſtorm or a fair wind at this day, as is notorious from travellers of credit; and perhaps a poet would not even in theſe ages be thought ridiculous, if, ſpeaking of Lapland, he ſhould introduce one of theſe Veneficæ's, and deſcribe the ceremonies ſhe uſed in the performance of her pretended incantations. Milton not unhappily has introduced the imagined power of theſe Lapland witches into his Paradiſe Loſt.

——The night-hag, when call'd
In ſecret, riding thro' the air ſhe comes,
Lur'd with the ſmell of infant blood, to dance
With Lapland witches, while the lab'ring moon
Eclipſes at their charms. ——

Soon in the luſcious feaſt themſelves they loſt,
And drank oblivion of their native coaſt.
Inſtant her circling wand the goddeſs waves,
To hogs transforms 'em, and the ſty receives.
No more was ſeen the human form divine ;
Head, face, and members, briſtle into ſwine :
Still curſt with ſenſe, their minds remain alone,
And their own voice affrights them when they groan.
Meanwhile the goddeſs in diſdain beſtows
The maſt and acorn, brutal food ! and ſtrows
The fruits of cornel, as their feaſt, around ;
Now prone and grov'ling on unſav'ry ground.
Eurylochus with penſive ſteps and ſlow,
Aghaſt returns ; the meſſenger of woe,
And bitter fate. To ſpeak he made eſſay
In vain eſſay'd, nor would his tongue obey,
His ſwelling heart deny'd the words their way :
But ſpeaking tears the want of words ſupply,
And the full ſoul burſts copious from his eye.

In ſhort Virgil has imitated Homer in all theſe bold epiſodes, and Horace calls them the miracles of the Odyſſey.

v. 278. *No more was ſeen the human form divine*, &c.] Longinus here reports a criticiſm of Zoilus ; he is very pleaſant upon this tranſformation of the companions of Ulyſſes, and calls them, "the ſqueaking pigs of Homer ;" we may gather from this inſtance the nature of his criticiſms, and conjecture that they tended to turn the fineſt incidents of Homer into ridicule. Burleſque was his talent, and inſtead of informing the reaſon by pointing out the errors of the poem, his only aim was to make his readers laugh ; but he drew upon himſelf the indignation of all the learned world : he was known by the name of the vile Thracian ſlave, and lived in great want and poverty ; and poſterity proſecutes his memory with the ſame animoſity. The man was really very learned, as Dionyſius Halicarnaſſus informs us : his morals were never reproached, and yet, as Vitruvius relates, he was crucified by Ptolemy, or as others write, ſtoned to death, or burnt alive at Smyrna ; ſo that his only crime was his defamation of Homer : a tragical inſtance of the great value which was ſet upon his poetry by antiquity, and of the danger of attacking a celebrated author with malice and envy.

Affrighted, anxious for our fellows fates,
We preſs to hear what ſadly he relates.
We went, Ulyſſes! (ſuch was thy command)
Thro' the lone thicket, and the deſert land.

v. 295, &c. *We went, Ulyſſes! (ſuch was thy command.)*] We have here a very lively picture of a perſon in a great fright, which was admired, obſerves Euſtathius, by the ancients. There is not only a remarkable harmony in the flowing of the poetry, but the very manner of ſpeaking repreſents the diſorder of the ſpeaker; he is in too great an emotion to introduce his ſpeech by any preface, he breaks at once into it, without preparation, as if he could not ſoon enough deliver his thoughts. Longinus quotes theſe lines as an inſtance of the great judgment of Homer: there is nothing, ſays that critic, which gives more life to a diſcourſe, than the taking away the connections and conjunctions; when the diſcourſe is not bound together and embarraſſed, it walks and ſlides along of itſelf, and will want very little oftentimes of going faſter even than the thought of the orator: thus in Xenophon, "Joining their bucklers, they gave back, "they fought, they ſlew, they dy'd togther;" of the ſame nature is that of Eurylochus.

We went, Ulyſſes—ſuch was thy command ——
Acceſs we ſought— nor was acceſs deny'd:
Radiant ſhe came—the portals open'd wide, &c.
I only wait behind—of all the train;
I waited long—and ey'd the doors in vain:
The reſt are vaniſh'd—none repaſs'd the gate.

Theſe periods thus cut off, and yet pronounced with precipitation, are ſigns of a lively ſorrow; which at the ſame time hinders, yet forces him to ſpeak.

Many ſuch ſudden tranſitions are to be found in Virgil, of equal beauty with this of Homer:

"Me, me, inquam qui feci, in me convertite tela."

Here the poet ſhews the earneſtneſs of the ſpeaker, who is in ſo much haſte to ſpeak, that his thoughts run to the end of the ſentence almoſt before his tongue can begin it. Thus Achæmenides in his flight from the Cyclops,

"—— Per ſidera teſtor,
"Per ſuperos, atque hoc cœli ſpirabile lumen,
"Tollite me, Teucri."

Here the poet makes no connection with the preceding diſcourſe, but leaves out the "inquit," to expreſs the precipitation and terrour of Achæmenides.

But our countryman Spenſer has equalled, if not ſurpaſſed theſe great poets of antiquity, in painting a figure of terrour in the

A palace in a woody vale we found
Brown with dark foreſts, and with ſhades around.
A voice celeſtial echo'd from the dome,
Or nymph, or goddeſs, chanting to the loom.
Acceſs we ſought, nor was acceſs deny'd:
Radiant ſhe came; the portals open'd wide:
The goddeſs mild invites the gueſts to ſtay:
They blindly follow where ſhe leads the way.
I only wait behind, of all the train;
I waited long, and ey'd the doors in vain:

ninth canto of the Fairy Queen, where ſir Treviſan flies from Deſpair.

He anſwered nought at all: but adding new
Fear to his firſt amazement, ſtaring wide
With ſtony eyes, and heartleſs hollow hue,
Aſtoniſh'd ſtood, as one that had eſpy'd
Infernal furies, with their chains unty'd;
Him yet again, and yet again beſpake
The gentle knight; who nought to him reply'd;
But trembling ev'ry joint did inly quake,
And falt'ring tongue, at laſt theſe words ſeem'd forth to ſhake,
For God's dear love, ſir knight, do me not ſtay,
For lo! he comes, he comes, faſt after me,
Eſt looking back, would fain have run away.

The deſcription ſets the figure full before our eyes, he ſpeaks ſhort, and in broken and interrupted periods, which excellently repreſent the agony of his thoughts; and when he is a little more confirmed and emboldened, he proceeds,

And am I now in ſafety ſure, quoth he,
From him who would have forced me to die?
And is the point of death now turn'd from me?
Then I may tell this hapleſs hiſtory.

We ſee he breaks out into interrogations, which, as Longinus obſerves, give great motion, ſtrength, and action to diſcourſe. If the poet had proceeded ſimply, the expreſſion had not been equal to the occaſion; but by theſe ſhort queſtions he gives ſtrength to it, and ſhews the diſorder of the ſpeaker, by the ſudden ſtarts and vehemence of the periods. The whole canto of deſpair is a piece of inimitable poetry; the picture of ſir Treviſan has a general reſemblance to this of Eurylochus, and ſeems to have been copied after it, as will appear upon compariſon.

The reſt are vaniſh'd, none repaſs'd the gate;
And not a man appears to tell their fate.
I heard, and inſtant o'er my ſhoulders flung
The belt in which my weighty falchion hung;
(A beamy blade) then ſeiz'd the bended bow,
And bade him guide the way, reſolv'd to go.
He, proſtrate falling, with both hands embrac'd
My knees, and weeping thus his ſuit addreſs'd.
O king belov'd of Jove! thy ſervant ſpare,
And ah, thyſelf the raſh attempt forbear!
Never, alas! thou never ſhalt return,
Or ſee the wretched for whoſe loſs we mourn.
With what remains from certain ruin fly,
And ſave the few not fated yet to die.
I anſwer'd ſtern. Inglorious then remain,
Here feaſt and loiter, and deſert thy train.

v. 313. *With both hands embrac'd my knees* —] The character of Eurylochus, who had married Clymene the ſiſter of Ulyſſes, is the character of a brave man, who being witneſs to the dreadful fate of his companions is diffident of himſelf, and judges that the only way to conquer the danger is to fly from it. To fear upon ſuch an occaſion, obſerves Dacier, is not cowardice, but wiſdom. But what is more remarkable in this deſcription, is the art of Homer in inſerting the character of a brave man under ſo great a conſternation, to ſet off the character of Ulyſſes, who knows how at once to be bold and wiſe; for the more terrible and deſperate the adventure is repreſented by Eurylochus, the greater appears the intrepidity of Ulyſſes, who truſting to his own wiſdom, and the aſſiſtance of the gods, has the courage to attempt it. What adds to the merit of the action is, that he unſolely for his companions, as Horace deſcribes him:

"Dum ſibi, dum ſociis reditum parat, aſpera multa
"Pertulit, adverſis rerum immerſabilis undis."

v. 321. ——— *Inglorious then remain,*
Here feaſt and loiter ——]

This expreſſion is uſed ſarcaſtically by Ulyſſes, and in deriſion of his fears. Dacier remarks, that Ulyſſes having not ſeen what is related by Eurylochus, believes his refuſal to return, proceeds from his faintheartedneſs: an inſtance, adds ſhe, that we frequently form wrong judgments of mens actions, when we are ignorant of the motives of

Alone, unfriended will I tempt my way;
The laws of fate compel, and I obey.
This ſaid, and ſcornful turning from the ſhore
My haughty ſtep, I ſtalk'd the valley o'er.
'Till now approaching nigh the magic bow'r,
Where dwelt th' enchantreſs ſkill'd in herbs of pow'r;
A form divine forth iſſu'd from the wood,
(Immortal Hermes with the golden rod)
In human ſemblance. On his bloomy face
Youth ſmil'd celeſtial, with each op'ning grace.
He ſeiz'd my hand, and gracious thus began.
Ah whither roam'ſt thou? much-enduring man!
O blind to fate! what led thy ſteps to rove
The horrid mazes of this magic grove?
Each friend you ſeek in yon' encloſure lies,
All loſt their form, and habitants of ſties.
Think'ſt thou by wit to model their eſcape?
Sooner ſhalt thou, a ſtranger to thy ſhape,
Fall prone their equal: firſt thy danger know,
Then take the antidote the gods beſtow.
The plant I give thro' all the direful bow'r
Shall guard thee, and avert the evil hour.
Now hear her wicked arts. Before thy eyes
The bowl ſhall ſparkle, and the banquet riſe;
Take this, nor from the faithleſs feaſt abſtain,
For temper'd drugs and poiſon ſhall be vain.

them. I confeſs I am of opinion, that there is ſome degree of cowardice in the character of Eurylochus: a man truly brave would not expreſs ſuch confuſion and terrour, in any extremity; he is not to be inſpirited either by Ulyſſes, or the example of his other companions, as appears from the ſequel, inſomuch that Ulyſſes threatens to kill him for a coward; this prevails over his firſt fears, and he ſubmits to meet a future danger, merely to avoid one that is preſent. What makes this obſervation more juſt is, that we never ſee a brave man drawn by Homer or Virgil in ſuch faint colours; but they always diſcover a preſence of mind upon all emergencies.

Soon as ſhe ſtrikes her wand, and gives the word,
Draw forth and brandiſh thy refulgent ſword,
And menace death: thoſe menaces ſhall move
Her alter'd mind to blandiſhment and love.
Nor ſhun the bleſſing proffer'd to thy arms,
Aſcend her bed, and taſte celeſtial charms:
So ſhall thy tedious toils a reſpite find,
And thy loſt friends return to human kind.
But ſwear her firſt by thoſe dread oaths that tie
The pow'rs below, the bleſſed in the ſky;
Leſt to thee naked ſecret fraud be meant,
Or magic bind thee, cold and impotent.
Thus while he ſpoke, the ſov'reign plant he drew,
Where on th' all-bearing earth unmark'd it grew,

v. 361. ——— *the ſov'reign plant he drew,*
Where on th' all-bearing earth unmark'd it grew, &c.]

This whole paſſage is to be underſtood allegorically. Mercury is reaſon, he being the god of ſcience: the plant which he gives as a preſervative againſt incantation is inſtruction; the root of it is black, the flower white and ſweet; the root denotes that the foundation or principles of inſtruction appear obſcure and bitter, and are diſtaſteful at firſt, according to that ſaying of Plato, "The beginnings of in-"ſtruction are always accompanied with reluctance and pain." The flower of Moly is white and ſweet; this denotes that the fruits of inſtruction are ſweet, agreeable, and nouriſhing. Mercury gives this plant; this intimates, that all inſtruction is the gift of heaven: Mercury brings it not with him, but gathers it from the places where he ſtands, to ſhew that wiſdom is not confined to places, but that every where it may be found, if heaven vouchſafes to diſcover it, and we are diſpoſed to receive and follow it. Thus Iſocrates underſtands the allegory of Moly; he adds, Πικρὰν εἶναι ῥίζαν αὐτῆς, τὸ δὲ Μώλυ ἄνθος λευκὸν κατὰ γάλα, διὰ τὴν τῆς τελευτῆς παιδείας λαμπρότητα, ἡδὴ καὶ τὸ ἡδὺ καὶ τρόφιμον. The root of Moly is bitter, but the flower of it white as milk, to denote the excellency of inſtruction, as well as the pleaſure and utility of it in the end. He further illuſtrates the Allegory, by adding Κάρπους τῆς παιδείας εἰ καὶ μὴ γάλακτι ἴκελους, ἀλλὰ γλυκεῖς, &c. That is, "the fruits of inſtruction are not only white "as milk, but ſweet, though they ſpring from a bitter root." Euſtathius.

Maximus Tyrius alſo gives this ſtory an allegorical ſenſe, diſſert. xvi. Αὐτὸν μὲν τὸν Ὀδυσσέα ἐχ' ὁρᾷς, ὡς παυλοίαις ξυμφοραῖς ἀντιτεχνώμενον ἀρετῇ ζώζει, τοῦτο αὐτῷ τὸ ἐκ Κίρκης Μῶλυ, τοῦτο τὸ

And ſhew'd its nature and its wond'rous pow'r :
Black was its root, but milky-white the flow'r ;
Moly the name, to mortals hard to find,
But all is eaſy to th'ætherial kind.
This Hermes gave, then gliding off the glade,
Shot to Olympus from the woodland ſhade.

While full of thought, revolving fates to come,
I ſpeed my paſſage to th' enchanted dome:
Arriv'd, before the lofty gates I ſtay'd ;
The lofty gates the goddeſs wide diſplay'd ;
She leads before, and to the feaſt invites ;
I follow ſadly to the magic rites.
Radiant with ſtarry ſtuds, a ſilver ſeat
Receiv'd my limbs ; a footſtool eas'd my feet.

ἐν θαλάτῃ κρήδεμνον ; that is, " Doſt thou not obſerve Ulyſſes, how " by oppoſing virtue to adverſity he preſerves his life ? This is the " Moly that protects him from Circe, this is the ſcarf that delivers " him from the ſtorm, from Polypheme, from hell, &c." See alſo diſſert. xix.

It is pretended that Moly is an Ægyptian plant, and that it was really made uſe of as a preſervative againſt enchantments : but I believe the Moly of Mercury, and the Nepenthe of Helen, are of the ſame production, and grow only in poetical ground.

Ovid has tranſlated this paſſage in his Metamorphoſis, lib. xiv.

" Pacifer huic dederat florem Cyllenius album ;
" Moly vocant ſuperi, nigrâ radice tenetur, &c."

There is a remarkable ſweetneſs in the verſe which deſcribes the appearance of Mercury in the ſhape of a young man ;

——— Νεηνίῃ ἀνδρὶ ἐοικὼς
Πρῶτον ὑπηνήτῃ τῦ περ χαριεςάτη ἥβη.

——On his bloomy face
Youth ſmil'd celeſtial——

Virgil was ſenſible of the beauty of it, and imitated it ;

" Ora puer primâ ſignans intonſo juventâ."

But in the opinion of Macrobius, he falls ſhort of Homer, lib. v. Saturn. 13. " Prætermiſsâ gratiâ incipientis pubertatis τῦ περ χαριεςάτη, minus gratam fecit Latinam deſcriptionem."

She mix'd the potion, fraudulent of ſoul;
The poiſon mantled in the golden bowl.
I took, and quaff'd it, confident in heav'n:
Then wav'd the wand, and then the word was giv'n.
Hence to thy fellows! (dreadful ſhe began)
Go, be a beaſt!——I heard, and yet was man.
Then ſudden whirling, like a waving flame,
My beamy falchion, I aſſault the dame.
Struck with unuſual fear, ſhe trembling cries,
She faints, ſhe falls; ſhe lifts her weeping eyes.
What art thou? ſay! from whence, from whom you came?
O more than human! tell thy race, thy name.
Amazing ſtrength, theſe poiſons to ſuſtain!
Not mortal thou, nor mortal is thy brain.
Or art thou he? the man to come (foretold
By Hermes pow'rful with the wand of gold)
The man from Troy, who wander'd ocean round;
The man for wiſdom's various arts renown'd,
Ulyſſes? oh! thy threat'ning fury ceaſe,
Sheath thy bright ſword, and join our hands in peace;
Let mutual joys our mutual truſt combine,
And love, and love-born confidence be thine.

v. 379. *I took, and quaff'd it, confident in heav'n.*] It may be aſked if Ulyſſes is not as culpable as his companions, in drinking this potion? Where lies the difference? And how is the allegory carried on, when Ulyſſes yields to the ſolicitation of Circe, that is pleaſure, and indulges, not reſiſts his appetites? The moral of the fable is, that all pleaſure is not unlawful, but the exceſs of it: we may enjoy provided it be with moderation. Ulyſſes does not taſte till he is fortified againſt it; whereas his companions yielded without any care or circumſpection; they indulged their appetites only, Ulyſſes takes merely out of a deſire to deliver his aſſociates: he makes himſelf maſter of Circe, or pleaſure, and is not in the power of it, and enjoys it upon his own terms; they are ſlaves to it, and out of a capacity ever to regain their freedom but by the aſſiſtance of Ulyſſes. The general moral of the whole fable of Circe is, that pleaſure is as dreadful an enemy as danger, and a Circe as hard to be conquered as a Polypheme.

And how, dread Circe! (furious I rejoin)
Can love, and love-born confidence be mine!
Beneath thy charms when my companions groan,
Transform'd to beaſts, with accents not their own.
O thou of fraudful heart! ſhall I be led
To ſhare thy feaſt-rites, or aſcend thy bed;
That, all unarm'd, thy vengeance may have vent,
And magic bind me, cold and impotent?
Celeſtial as thou art, yet ſtand deny'd;
Or ſwear that oath by which the gods are ty'd,
Swear, in thy ſoul no latent frauds remain,
Swear, by the vow which never can be vain.
The goddeſs ſwore: then ſeiz'd my hand, and led
To the ſweet tranſports of the genial bed.
Miniſtrant to their queen, with buſy care
Four faithful handmaids the ſoft rites prepare;

v. 403. ——— *Shall I be led*
To ſhare thy feaſt-rites ———]

Euſtathius obſerves, that we have here the picture of a man truly wiſe, who when pleaſure courts him to indulge his appetites, not only knows how to abſtain, but ſuſpects it to be a bait to draw him into ſome inconveniencies: a man ſhould never think himſelf in ſecurity in the houſe of a Circe. It may be added, that theſe apprehenſions of Ulyſſes are not without a foundation; from this intercourſe with that goddeſs, Telegonus ſprung, who accidentally ſlew his father Ulyſſes.

v. 414. *Four faithful handmaids*, &c.] This large deſcription of the entertainment in the palace of Circe, is particularly judicious; Ulyſſes is in a houſe of pleaſure, and the poet dwells upon it, and ſhews how every circumſtance contributes to promote and advance it. The attendants are all nymphs, and the bath and perfumes uſher in the feaſt and wines. The four verſes that follow, are omitted by Dacier, and they are marked in Euſtathius as ſuperfluous; they are to be found in other parts of the Odyſſey; but that, I confeſs, would be no argument why they ſhould not ſtand here (ſuch repetitions being frequent in Homer) if they had a due propriety, but they contain a tautology. We ſee before a table ſpread for the entertainment of Ulyſſes, why then ſhould that circumſtance be repeated? If they are omitted, there will no chaſm or incoherence appear, and therefore probably they were not originally inſerted here by Homer.

Nymphs ſprung from fountains, or from ſhady woods,
Or the fair offspring of the ſacred floods.
One o'er the couches painted carpets threw,
Whoſe purple luſtre glow'd againſt the view:
White linen lay beneath. Another plac'd
The ſilver ſtands with golden flaſkets grac'd:
With dulcet bev'rage this the beaker crown'd,
Fair in the midſt, with gilded cups around:
That in the tripod o'er the kindled pile
The water pours; the bubbling waters boil:
An ample vaſe receives the ſmoking wave;
And, in the bath prepar'd, my limbs I lave:
Reviving ſweets repair the mind's decay,
And take the painful ſenſe of toil away.
A veſt and tunic o'er me next ſhe threw,
Freſh from the bath and dropping balmy dew;
Then led and plac'd me on the ſov'reign ſeat,
With carpets ſpread; a footſtool at my feet.
The golden ew'r a nymph obſequious brings,
Repleniſh'd from the cool tranſlucent ſprings;
With copious water the bright vaſe ſupplies
A ſilver laver of capacious ſize.
I waſh'd. The table in fair order ſpread,
They heap the glitt'ring caniſters with bread;
Viands of various kinds allure the taſte,
Of choiceſt ſort and ſavour, rich repaſt!
Circe in vain invites the feaſt to ſhare;
Abſent I ponder, and abſorpt in care:
While ſcenes of woe roſe anxious in my breaſt
The queen beheld me, and theſe words addreſt.
Why ſits Ulyſſes ſilent and apart,
Some hoard of grief cloſe-harbour'd at his heart?
Untouch'd before thee ſtand the cates divine,
And unregarded laughs the roſy wine.
Can yet a doubt, or any dread remain,
When ſworn that oath which never can be vain?

I anſwer'd, Goddeſs! humane is thy breaſt,
By juſtice ſway'd, by tender pity preſt:
Ill fits it me, whoſe friends are ſunk to beaſts,
To quaff thy bowls, or riot in thy feaſts.
Me would'ſt thou pleaſe? for them thy cares employ,
And them to me reſtore, and me to joy.
With that, ſhe parted: in her potent hand
She bore the virtue of the magic wand.
Then haſt'ning to the ſties ſet wide the door,
Urg'd forth, and drove the briſtly herd before;
Unwieldy, out they ruſh'd, with gen'ral cry,
Enormous beaſts diſhoneſt to the eye.
Now touch'd by counter-charms, they change agen,
And ſtand majeſtic, and recall'd to men.
Thoſe hairs of late that briſtled ev'ry part,
Fall off; miraculous effect of art!
'Till all the form in full proportion riſe,
More young, more large, more graceful to my eyes.
They ſaw, they knew me, and with eager pace
Clung to their maſter in a long embrace:
Sad, pleaſing ſight! with tears each eye ran o'er,
And ſobs of joy re-echo'd thro' the bow'r:
Ev'n Circe wept, her adamantine heart
Felt pity enter, and ſuſtain'd her part.
Son of Laertes! (then the queen began)
Oh much-enduring, much-experienc'd man!
Haſte to thy veſſel on the ſea-beat ſhore,
Unload thy treaſures, and the gally moor;
Then bring thy friends, ſecure from future harms,
And in our grottoes ſtow thy ſpoils and arms.

v. 468. *More young,—more graceful to my eyes.*] Homer excellently carries on his allegory: he intends by this expreſſion of the enlargement of the beauty of Ulyſſes's companions, to teach that men who turn from an evil courſe, into the paths of virtue, excel even themſelves; having learned the value of virtue from the miſeries they ſuffered in purſuit of vice, they become new men, and as it were enjoy a ſecond life. Euſtathius.

She ſaid. Obedient to her high command
I quit the place, and haſten to the ſtrand.
My ſad companions on the beach I found,
Their wiſtful eyes in floods of ſorrow drown'd.
As from freſh paſtures and the dewy field
(When loaded cribs their ev'ning banquet yield)
The lowing herds return; around them throng
With leaps and bounds their late-impriſon'd young,
Ruſh to their mothers with unruly joy,
And echoing hills return the tender cry:
So round me preſs'd exulting at my ſight,
With cries and agonies of wild delight,
The weeping ſailors; nor leſs fierce their joy
Than if return'd to Ithaca from Troy.

v. 485. *As from freſh paſtures and the dewy field*, &c.] If this ſimile were to be rendered literally, it would run thus: "as calves "ſeeing the droves of cows returning at night when they are filled "with their paſturage, run ſkipping out to meet them; the ſtalls no "longer detain them, but running round their dams they fill the "plain with their lowings, &c." If a ſimilitude of this nature were to be introduced into modern poetry, I am of opinion it would fall under ridicule for a want of delicacy: but in reality, images drawn from nature, and a rural life, have always a very good effect; in particular, this before us enlivens a melancholy deſcription of ſorrows, and ſo exactly expreſſes in every point the joy of Ulyſſes's companions, we ſee them in the very deſcription. To judge rightly of compariſons, we are not to examine if the ſubject from whence they are derived be great or little, noble or familiar, but we are principally to conſider if the image produced be clear and lively, if the poet have ſkill to dignify it by poetical words, and if it perfectly paints the thing it is intended to repreſent. This rule fully vindicates Homer: though he frequently paints low life, yet he never uſes terms which are not noble; or if he uſes humble words or phraſes, it is with ſo much art, that, as Dionyſius obſerves, they become noble and harmonious. In ſhort, a top may be uſed with propriety and elegance in a ſimilitude by a Virgil, and the ſun may be diſhonoured by a Mævius; a mean thought expreſſed in noble terms being more tolerable, than a noble thought diſgraced by mean expreſſions. Things that have an intrinſic greatneſs need only to be barely repreſented to fill the ſoul with admiration, but it ſhews the ſkill of a poet to raiſe low ſubjects, and exalt common appearances into dignity.

Ah maſter! ever honour'd, ever dear,
(Theſe tender words on ev'ry ſide I hear)
What other joy can equal thy return?
Not that lov'd country for whoſe ſight we mourn,
The ſoil that nurs'd us, and that gave us breath:
But ah! relate our loſt companions death.

I anſwer'd chearful. Haſte, your gally moor,
And bring our treaſures and our arms aſhore:
Thoſe in yon' hollow caverns let us lay;
Then riſe and follow where I lead the way.
Your fellows live: believe your eyes, and come
To take the joys of Circe's ſacred dome.

With ready ſpeed the joyful crew obey:
Alone Eurylochus perſuades their ſtay.
Whither (he cry'd) ah whither will ye run?
Seek ye to meet thoſe evils ye ſhou'd ſhun?
Will you the terrours of the dome explore,
In ſwine to grovel, or in lions roar,
Or wolf-like howl away the midnight hour
In dreadful watch around the magic bow'r?
Remember Cyclops, and his bloody deed;
The leader's raſhneſs made the ſoldiers bleed.

I heard incens'd, and firſt reſolv'd to ſpeed
My flying falchion at the rebel's head.
Dear as he was, by ties of kindred bound,
This hand had ſtretch'd him breathleſs on the ground;
But all at once my interpoſing train
For mercy pleaded, nor could plead in vain.

v. 515. *Remember Cyclops*, &c.] The poet paints Eurylochus uniformly, under great diſorder of mind and terrible apprehenſions: there is no ſimilitude between Circe and Cyclops, with reſpect to the uſage of the companions of Ulyſſes; but Homer puts theſe expreſſions into his mouth, to repreſent the nature of terrour, which confounds the thoughts, and conſequently diſtracts the language of a perſon who is poſſeſſed by it. The character therefore of Eurylochus is the imitation of a perſon confounded with fears, ſpeaking irrationally and incoherently. Euſtathius.

Leave here the man who dares his prince deſert,
Leave to repentance and his own ſad heart,
To guard the ſhip. Seek we the ſacred ſhades
Of Circe's palace, where Ulyſſes leads.
This with one voice declar'd, the riſing train
Left the black veſſel by the murm'ring main.
Shame touch'd Eurylochus's alter'd breaſt,
He fear'd my threats, and follow'd with the reſt.
Meanwhile the goddeſs, with indulgent cares
And ſocial joys, the late transform'd repairs;
The bath, the feaſt, their fainting ſoul renews;
Rich in refulgent robes, and dropping balmy dews:
Bright'ning with joy their eager eyes behold
Each other's face, and each his ſtory told;
Then guſhing tears the narrative confound,
And with their ſobs the vaulted roofs reſound.
When huſh'd their paſſion, thus the goddeſs cries;
Ulyſſes, taught by labours to be wiſe;
Let this ſhort memory of grief ſuffice.
To me are known the various woes ye bore,
In ſtorms by ſea, in perils on the ſhore;
Forget whatever was in fortune's pow'r,
And ſhare the pleaſures of this genial hour.
Such be your minds as ere ye left your coaſt,
Or learn'd to ſorrow for a country loſt.
Exiles and wand'rers now, where-e'er ye go,
Too faithful memory renews your woe;
The cauſe remov'd, habitual griefs remain,
And the ſoul ſaddens by the uſe of pain.
Her kind intreaty mov'd the gen'ral breaſt;
Tir'd with long toil, we willing ſunk to reſt.
We ply'd the banquet, and the bowl we crown'd,
'Till the full circle of the year came round.
But when the ſeaſons, following in their train,
Brought back the months, the days, and hours again;

As from a lethargy at once they riſe,
And urge their chief with animating cries.
Is this Ulyſſes, our inglorious lot?
And is the name of Ithaca forgot?
Shall never the dear land in proſpect riſe,
Or the lov'd palace glitter in our eyes?
Melting I heard; yet 'till the ſun's decline
Prolong'd the feaſt, and quaff'd the roſy wine:
But when the ſhades came on at ev'ning hour,
And all lay ſlumb'ring in the duſky bow'r;
I came a ſuppliant to fair Circe's bed,
The tender moment ſeiz'd, and thus I ſaid.
Be mindful, goddeſs, of thy promiſe made;
Muſt ſad Ulyſſes ever be delay'd?
Around their lord my ſad companions mourn,
Each breaſt beats homeward, anxious to return:
If but a moment parted from thy eyes,
Their tears flow round me, and my heart complies.
Go then (ſhe cry'd) ah go! yet think not I,
Not Circe, but the fates your wiſh deny.
Ah hope not yet to breathe thy native air!
Far other journey firſt demands thy care;
To tread th' uncomfortable paths beneath,
And view the realms of darkneſs and of death.

v. 579. *Far other journey——*
To tread th' uncomfortable paths beneath.]

There ſhould in all the epiſodes of epic poetry appear a convenience, if not a neceſſity of every incident; it may therefore be aſked what neceſſity there is for this deſcent of Ulyſſes into hell to conſult the ſhade of Tireſias? Could not Circe, who was a goddeſs, diſcover to him all the future contingencies of his life? Euſtathius excellently anſwers this objection; Circe declares to Ulyſſes the neceſſity of conſulting Tireſias, that he may learn from the mouth of that prophet, that his death was to be from the ocean; ſhe acts thus in order to diſpoſe him to ſtay with her, after his return from the regions of the dead: or if ſhe cannot perſuade him to ſtay with her, that ſhe may at leaſt ſecure him from returning to her rival Calypſo; ſhe had promiſed immortality, but

There ſeek the Theban bard, depriv'd of ſight;
Within, irradiate with prophetick light;
To whom Perſephone, entire and whole,
Gave to retain th' unſeparated ſoul: 585

by this deſcent, he will learn that it is decreed that he ſhould receive his death from the ocean; for he died by the bone of a ſea-fiſh called Xiphias. Her love for Ulyſſes induces her not to make the diſcovery herſelf, for it was evident ſhe would not find credit, but Ulyſſes would impute it to her love, and the deſire ſhe had to deter him from leaving her iſland. This will appear more probable, if we obſerve the conduct of Circe in the future parts of the Odyſſey: ſhe relates to him the dangers of Scylla and Charybdis, of the oxen of Phœbus, and the Sirens; but ſays nothing concerning his death: this likewiſe gives an air of probability to the relation. The iſle of Circe was adjoining to Scylla and Charybdis, &c. and conſequently ſhe may be ſuppoſed to be acquainted with thoſe places, and give an account of them to Ulyſſes with exactneſs, but ſhe leaves the decrees of heaven, and the fate of Ulyſſes to the narration of the prophet, it beſt ſuiting his character to ſee into futurity. By the deſcent of Ulyſſes into hell it may be ſignified, that a wiſe man ought to be ignorant of nothing; that he ought to aſcend in thought into heaven, and underſtand the heavenly appearances, and be acquainted with what is contained in the bowels of the earth, and to bring to light the ſecrets of nature: that he ought to know the nature of the ſoul, what it ſuffers, and how it acts after it is ſeparated from the body. Euſtathius.

v. 584. *To whom Perſephone*, &c.] Homer here gives the reaſon why Tireſias ſhould be conſulted, rather than any other ghoſt, becauſe

Τῷ τε φρενὲς ἔμπεδοί εἰσι.

This expreſſion is fully explained, and the notion of the ſoul after death, which prevailed among the ancients, is ſet in a clear light, verſe 92, and 124, of the xxiii book of the Iliad, to which paſſage I refer the readers. But whence had Tireſias this privilege above the reſt of the dead? Callimachus aſcribes it to Pluto.

Καὶ μίνῳ· εὖτε θάνῃ, πεπνυμένῳ ἐν νεκύεσσι
Φοιτάσει, μεγάλῳ τιμιῳ Ἀγησίλα.

Tully mentions this pre-eminence of Tireſias in his firſt book of Divination. Perhaps the whole fiction may ariſe from his great reputation among the antients for prophecy; and in honour to his memory they might imagine that his ſoul after death retained the ſame ſuperiority. Ovid in his Metamorphoſis gives us a very jocular reaſon for the blindneſs and prophetick knowledge of Tireſias, from a matrimonial conteſt between Jupiter and Juno. Cato Major, as Plutarch in his Political Precepts informs us, applied this verſe to

The reſt are forms, of empty Æther made;
Impaſſive ſemblance, and a flitting ſhade.
Struck at the word, my very heart was dead:
Penſive I ſat; my tears bedew'd the bed;
To hate the light and life my ſoul begun,
And ſaw that all was grief beneath the ſun.
Compos'd at length, the guſhing tears ſuppreſt,
And my toſt limbs now weary'd into reſt,
How ſhall I tread (I cry'd) ah Circe! ſay,
The dark deſcent, and who ſhall guide the way?
Can living eyes behold the realms below?
What bark to waft me, and what wind to blow?
Thy fated road (the magick pow'r reply'd)
Divine Ulyſſes! aſks no mortal guide.
Rear but the maſt, the ſpacious ſail diſplay,
The northern winds ſhall wing thee on thy way.
Soon ſhalt thou reach old ocean's utmoſt ends,
Where to the main the ſhelving ſhore deſcends;

Scipio, when he was made conſul contrary to the Roman ſtatutes.

Οἷος πέπνυσθαι, τοὶ δὲ σκιαὶ αἴσσουσιν.

But I ought not to ſuppreſs what Diodorus Siculus relates concerning Tireſias. Biblioth. lib. iv. he tells us, that he had a daughter named Daphne, a prieſteſs at Delphi. Παρ' ἧς φασὶ τὸν ποιητὴν Ὅμηρον πολλὰ τῶν ἐπῶν σφετερισάμενον, κοσμῆσαι τὴν ἰδίαν ποίησιν. That is, "From whom it is ſaid, that the poet Homer received many (of "the Sibyls) verſes, and adorned his own poetry with them." If this be true, there lay a debt of gratitude upon Homer, and he pays it honourably, by this diſtinguiſhing character, which he gives to the father. An inſtance of a worthy diſpoſition in the poet, and it remains at once an honour to Tireſias, and a monument of his own gratitude.

This deſcent of Ulyſſes into hell has a very happy effect, it gives Homer an opportunity to embelliſh his poetry with an admirable variety, and to inſert fables and hiſtories that at once inſtruct and delight It is particularly happy with reſpect to the Phæacians, who could not but highly admire a perſon whoſe wiſdom had not only delivered him from ſo many perils on earth, but had been permitted by the gods to ſee the regions of the dead, and return among the living; this relation could not fail of pleaſing an audience, delighted with ſtrange ſtories, and extraordinary adventures.

v. 602. *Soon ſhalt thou reach old ocean's utmoſt ends*, &c.] This whole ſcene is excellently imagined by the poet, as Euſtathius ob-

The barren trees of Proſerpine's black woods,
Poplars and willows trembling o'er the floods;

ſerves; the trees are all barren, the place is upon the ſhores where nothing grows; and all the rivers are of a melancholy ſignification, ſuitable to the ideas we have of thoſe infernal regions. Ulyſſes arrives at this place, where he calls up the ſhades of the dead, in the ſpace of one day; from whence we may conjecture, that he means a place that lies between Cumæ and Baiæ, near the lake Avernus, in Italy; which, as Strabo remarks, is the ſcene of the necromancy of Homer, according to the opinion of antiquity. He further adds, that there really are ſuch rivers as Homer mentions, though not placed in their true ſituation, according to the liberty allowable to poetry. Others write, that the Cimmerii once inhabited Italy, and that the famous cave of Pauſilipe was begun by them about the time of the Trojan wars: here they offered ſacrifice to the manes, which might give occaſion to Homer's fiction. The Grecians, who inhabited theſe places after the Cimmerians, converted theſe dark habitations into ſtoves, baths, &c.

Silius Italicus writes, that the Lucrine lake was anciently called Cocytus, lib. xii.

"Aſt hic Lucrino manſiſſe vocabula quondam
"Cocyti memorat." ———

It is alſo probable, that Acheron was the antient name of Avernus, becauſe Acheruſia, a large water near Cumæ, flows into it by concealed paſſages. Silius Italicus informs us, that Avernus was alſo called Styx.

"Ille olim populis dictum Styga, nomine verſo,
"Stagna inter celebrem nunc mitia monſtrat Avernum."

Here Hannibal offered ſacrifice to the manes, as it is recorded by Livy; and Tully affirms it from an antient poet, from whom he quotes the following fragment;

"Inde in vicinià noſtrâ Averni lacus,
"Unde animæ excitantur obſcurâ umbra,
"Alti Acherontis aperto oſtio."

This may ſeem to juſtify the obſervation that Acheron was once the name of Avernus, though the words are capable of a different interpretation.

If theſe remarks be true, it is probable that Homer does not neglect geography, as moſt commentators judge. Virgil deſcribes Æneas deſcending into hell by Avernus, after the example of Homer. Milton places theſe rivers in hell and beautifully deſcribes their natures in his Paradiſe Loſt.

———Along the banks
Of four infernal rivers, that diſgorge

There fix thy veſſel in the lonely bay,
And enter there the kingdoms void of day:
Where Phlegethon's loud torrents ruſhing down,
Hiſs in the flaming gulf of Acheron;
And where, ſlow-rolling from the Stygian bed,
Cocytus' lamentable waters ſpread:
Where the dark rock o'erhangs th' infernal lake,
And mingling ſtreams eternal murmurs make.
Firſt draw thy falchion, and on ev'ry ſide
Trench the black earth a cubit long and wide:
To all the ſhades around libations pour,
And o'er th' ingredients ſtrow the hallow'd flour:
New wide and milk, with honey temper'd, bring,
And living water from the cryſtal ſpring.
Then the wan ſhades and feeble ghoſts implore,
With promis'd off'rings on thy native ſhore;
A barren cow, the ſtateliеſt of the iſle,
And, heap'd with various wealth, a blazing pile:
Theſe to the reſt; but to the ſeer muſt bleed
A ſable ram, the pride of all thy breed,
Theſe ſolemn vows and holy offerings paid
To all the phantom-nations of the dead;

Into the burning lake their baleful ſtreams,
Abhorred Styx, the flood of deadly hate:
Sad Acheron, of ſorrow, black and deep:
Cocytus, nam'd of lamentation loud
Heard on the rueful ſtream: fierce Phlegethon,
Whoſe waves of torrent-fire inflame with rage;
Far off from theſe a ſlow and ſilent ſtream,
Lethe, the river of oblivion, rolls
Her wat'ry labyrinth, whereof who drinks
Forthwith his former ſtate and being forgets
Forgets both joy and grief, pleaſure and pain.

Thus alſo agreeably to the idea of hell the offerings to the infernal powers are all black, the Cimmerians lie in a land of darkneſs; the heifer which Ulyſſes is to offer is barren, like that in Virgil.

"——Sterilemque tibi, Proſerpina, Vaccam;"

to denote that the grave is unfruitful, that it devours all things, that it is a place where all things are forgotten.

Be next thy care the ſable ſheep to place
Full o'er the pit, and hell-ward turn their face:
But from th" infernal rite thine eye withdraw,
And back to ocean glance with rev'rend awe.
Sudden ſhall ſkim along the duſky glades
Thin airy ſhoals, and viſionary ſhades.
Then give command the ſacrifice to haſte,
Let the flay'd victims in the flame be caſt,
And ſacred vows, and myſtic ſong, apply'd
To griſly Pluto, and his gloomy bride.
Wide o'er the pool, thy falchion wav'd around
Shall drive the ſpectres from forbidden ground:
The ſacred draught ſhall all the dead forbear,
Till awful from the ſhades ariſe the ſeer.
Let him, oraculous, the end, the way,
The turns of all thy future fate, diſplay,
Thy pilgrimage to come, and remnant of thy day.
So ſpeaking, from the ruddy orient ſhone
The morn conſpicuous on her golden throne.
The goddeſs with a radiant tunic dreſt
My limbs, and o'er me caſt a ſilken veſt.
Long flowing robes, of pureſt white, array
The nymph that added luſtre to the day:
A tiar wreath'd her head with many a fold;
Her waſte was circled with a zone of gold.
Forth iſſuing then, from place to place I flew;
Rouſe man by man, and animate my crew.
Riſe, riſe, my mates! 'tis Circe gives command:
Our journey calls us; haſte, and quit the land.
All riſe and follow, yet depart not all,
For fate decreed one wretched man to fall.
A youth there was, Elpenor was he nam'd,
Not much for ſenſe, nor much for courage fam'd;

v. 659. *A youth there was, Elphenor was he nam'd.*] Homer diſmiſſes not the deſcription of this houſe of pleaſure and debauch, without ſhewing the moral of his fable, which is the ill conſe-

The youngeſt of our band, a vulgar ſoul
Born but to banquet, and to drain the bowl.
He, hot and careleſs, on a turret's height
With ſleep repair'd the long debauch of night:
The ſudden tumult ſtirr'd him where he lay,
And down he haſten'd, but forgot the way;
Full endlong from the roof the ſleeper fell,
And ſnapp'd the ſpinal joint, and wak'd in hell.
The reſt croud round me with an eager look;
I met them with a ſigh, and thus beſpoke.
Already, friends! ye think your toils are o'er,
Your hopes already touch your native ſhore:
Alas! far otherwiſe the nymph declares,
Far other journey firſt demands our cares;
To tread th' uncomfortable paths beneath,
The dreary realms of darkneſs and of death:
To ſeek Tireſias' awful ſhade below,
And thence our fortunes and our fates to know.

quences that attend thoſe who indulge themſelves in ſenſuality; this is ſet forth in the puniſhment of Elpenor. He deſcribes him as a perſon of no worth, to ſhew that debauchery enervates our faculties, and renders both the mind and body incapable of thinking, or acting with greatneſs and bravery. At the ſame time theſe circumſtantial relations are not without a good effect; for they render the ſtory probable, as if it were ſpoken with the veracity of an hiſtory, not the liberty of poetry.

I will conclude this book with a paragraph from Plutarch's morals: it is a piece of advice to the fair ſex, drawn from the ſtory of Circe and Ulyſſes. "They who bait their hooks (ſays this philoſopher) "with intoxicated drugs may catch fiſh with little trouble; but then "they prove dangerous to eat, and unpleaſant to the taſte: thus wo-"men who uſe arts to enſnare their admirers, become wives of "fools and mad-men: they whom the ſorcereſs Circe enchanted, "were no better than brutes; and ſhe uſed them accordingly, in-"cloſing them with ſties; but ſhe loved Ulyſſes intirely, whoſe pru-"dence avoided her intoxications, and made his converſation agree-"able. Thoſe women who will not believe that Paſiphae was ever "enamoured of a bull, are yet themſelves ſo extravagant, as to "abandon the ſociety of men of ſenſe and temperance, and to be-"take themſelves to the embraces of brutal and ſtupid fellows." Plut. Conjugal Precepts.

My ſad companions heard in deep deſpair ;
Frantick they tore their manly growth of hair ;
To earth they fell ; the tears began to rain ;
But tears in mortal miſeries are vain.
Sadly they far'd along the ſea-beat ſhore ;
Still heav'd their hearts, and ſtill their eyes ran o'er.
The ready victims at our bark we found,
The ſable ewe, and ram, together bound.
For ſwift as thought the goddeſs had been there,
And thence had glided, viewleſs as the air :
The paths of gods what mortal can ſurvey ?
Who eyes their motion ? who ſhall trace their way ?

THE ODYSSEY.

*BOOK XI.

THE ARGUMENT.

The deſcent into hell.

Ulyſſes continues his narration; how he arrived at the land of the Cimmerians, and what ceremonies he performed to invoke the dead. The manner of his deſcent, and the apparition of the ſhades: his converſation with Elpenor, and with Tireſias, who informs him in a prophetick manner of his fortunes to come. He meets his mother Anticlea, from whom he learns the ſtate of his family. He ſees the ſhades of the antient heroines, afterwards of the heroes, and converſes in particular with Agamemnon and Achilles. Ajax keeps at a ſullen diſtance, and diſdains to anſwer him. He then beholds Tityus, Tantalus, Siſyphus, Hercules: till he is deterred from further curioſity by the apparition of horrid ſpectres, and the cries of the wicked in torments.

NOW to the ſhores we bend, a mournful train,
Climb the tall bark, and lanch into the main:
At once the maſt we rear, at once unbind
The ſpacious ſheet, and ſtretch it to the wind:

* The antients called this book Νεκυομαντεία, or Νεκύα, the book of necromancy: becauſe (ſays Euſtathius) it contains an interview between Ulyſſes and the ſhades of the dead.

Virgil has not only borrowed the general deſign from Homer, but imitated many particular incidents: L'Abbé Fraguier in the Memoirs of Literature gives his judgment in favour of the Roman poet, and juſtly obſerves, that the end and deſign of the journey is more important in Virgil than in Homer. Ulyſſes deſcends to con-

Then pale and penſive ſtand, with cares oppreſt,
And ſolemn horrour ſaddens ev'ry breaſt.

ſult Tireſias, Æneas his father. Ulyſſes takes a review of the ſhades of celebrated perſons that preceded his times, or whom he knew at Troy, who have no relation to the ſtory of the Odyſſey: Æneas receives the hiſtory of his own poſterity; his father inſtructs him how to manage the Italian war, and how to conclude it with honour; that is, to lay the foundations of the greateſt empire in the world; and the poet by a very happy addreſs takes an opportunity to pay a noble compliment to his patron Auguſtus. In the Æneid there is a magnificent deſcription of the deſcent and entrance into hell; and the "diſeaſes, cares and terrours" that Æneas ſees in his journey, are very happily imagined, as an introduction into the regions of death: whereas in Homer there is nothing ſo noble, we ſcarce are able to diſcover the place where the poet lays his ſcene, or whether Ulyſſes continues below or above the ground. Inſtead of a deſcent into hell, it ſeems rather a conjuring up, or an evocation of the dead from hell; according to the words of Horace, who undoubtedly had this paſſage of Homer in his thoughts. Satyr viii. lib. 1.

" —— Scalpere terram
" Unguibus, & pullam divellere mordicus agnam
" Cœperunt, cruor in foſſam confuſus, ut inde
" Manes elicerent, animas reſponſa daturas."

But if it be underſtood of an evocation only, how ſhall we account for ſeveral viſions and deſcriptions in the concluſion of this book? Ulyſſes ſees Tantalus in the waters of hell, and Siſyphus rolling a ſtone up an infernal mountain; theſe Ulyſſes could not conjure up, and conſequently muſt be ſuppoſed to have entered at leaſt the borders of thoſe infernal regions. In ſhort, Fraguier is of opinion, that Virgil profited more by the Frogs of Ariſtophanes than by Homer: and Mr Dryden prefers the ſixth book of the Æneid to the eleventh of the Odyſſey, I think with very great reaſon.

I will take this opportunity briefly to mention the original of all theſe fictions of infernal rivers, judges, &c. ſpoken of by Homer, and repeated and enlarged by Virgil. They are of Ægyptian extract, as Mr. Sandys (that faithful traveller, and judicious poet) obſerves, ſpeaking of the mummies of Memphis, p 134.

" Theſe ceremonies performed, they laid the corpſe in a boat to
" be waſted over Acheruſia, a lake on the ſouth of Memphis, by
" one perſon only, whom they called Charon; which gave Or-
" pheus the invention of his infernal ferryman; an ill-favoured
" ſlovenly fellow, as Virgil deſcribes him, Æneid vi. About this
" lake ſtood the ſhady temple of Hecate, with the ports of Cocy-
" tus and Oblivion, ſeparated by bars of braſs, the original of like
" fables. When landed on the other ſide, the bodies were brought

A freſh'ning breeze the * magic pow'r ſupply'd,
While the wing'd veſſel flew along the tide;
Our oars we ſhipp'd: all day the ſwelling ſails
Full from the guiding pilot catch'd the gales.
Now ſunk the ſun from his aerial height,
And o'er the ſhaded billows ruſh'd the night:
When lo! we reach'd old ocean's utmoſt bounds,
Where rocks controll his waves with ever-during mounds.

" before certain judges; if convicted of an evil life, they were de-
" prived of burial; if otherwiſe, they were ſuffered to be inter-
" red" This explication ſhews the foundation of thoſe antient fables of Charon, Rhadamanthus, &c. and alſo that the poets had a regard to truth in their inventions, and grounded even their fables upon ſome remarkable cuſtoms, which grew obſcure and abſurd only becauſe the memory of the cuſtoms to which they allude is loſt to poſterity.

I will only add from Dacier, that this book is an evidence of the antiquity of the opinion of the ſoul's immortality. It is upon this that the moſt antient of all divinations was founded, I mean that which was performed by the evocation of the dead. There is a very remarkable inſtance of this in the holy ſcripture, in an age not very diſtant from that of Homer. Saul conſults one of theſe infernal agents to call up Samuel, who appears, or ſome evil ſpirit in his form, and predicts his impending death and calamities. This is a pregnant inſtance of the antiquity of necromancy, and that it was not of Homer's invention; it prevailed long before his days among the Chaldeans, and ſpread over all the oriental world. Æſchylus has a Tragedy intitled Perſæ, in which the ſhade of Darius is called up, like that of Samuel, and foretells queen Atoſſa all her misfortunes. Thus it appears that there was a foundation for what Homer writes; he only embelliſhes the opinions of antiquity with the ornaments of poetry.

I muſt confeſs that Homer gives a miſerable account of a future ſtate; there is not a perſon deſcribed in happineſs, unleſs perhaps it be Tireſias: the good and the bad ſeem all in the ſame condition: whereas Virgil has an hell for the wicked, and an Elyſium for the juſt. Though perhaps it may be a vindication of Homer to ſay, that the notions of Virgil of a future ſtate were different from thoſe of Homer; according to whom hell might only be a receptacle for the vehicles of the dead, and that while they were in hell, their ψυχὴν or ſpirit might be in heaven, as appears from what is ſaid of the εἴδωλον of Hercules in this xith book of the Odyſſey.

* Circe.

There in a lonely land, and gloomy cells,
The duſky nation of Cimmeria dwells;
The ſun ne'er views th' uncomfortable ſeats,
When radiant he advances, or retreats:

v. 15. *There in a lonely land, and gloomy cells,*
The duſky nation of Cimmeria dwells.]
It is the opinion of many commentators, that Homer conſtantly in theſe voyages of Ulyſſes makes uſe of a fabulous geography; but perhaps the contrary opinion in many places may be true: in this paſſage, Ulyſſes in the ſpace of one day ſails from the iſland of Circe to the Cimmerians: now it is very evident from Herodotus and Strabo, that they inhabited the regions near the Boſphorus, and conſequently Ulyſſes could not ſail thither in the compaſs of a day; and therefore, ſays Strabo, the poet removes not only the Cimmerians, but their climate and darkneſs, from the northern Boſphorus into Campania in Italy.

But that there really were a people in Italy named Cimmerians is evident from the teſtimony of many authors. So Lycophron plainly underſtands this paſſage, and relates thoſe adventures as performed in Italy. He recapitulates all the voyages of Ulyſſes, and mentioning the deſcent into hell, and the Cimmerians, he immediately deſcribes the infernal rivers, and adds, (ſpeaking of the Apennine)

Ἐξ οὗ τὰ πάντα χύτλα, ᾗ πᾶσαι μυχῶν
Πηγαὶ, κατ' Αὐσονίτιν ἕλκονται χθόνα.

That is, "From whence all the rivers, and all the fountains flow "through the regions of Italy." And theſe lines of Tibullus,

"Cimmerion etiam obſcuras acceſſit ad arces,
"Queis nunquam candente dies apparuit ortu,
"Sive ſupra terras Phœbus, ſeu curreret infra."

are underſtood by all interpreters to denote the Italian Cimmerians: who dwelt near Baiæ and the lake Avernus: and therefore Homer may be imagined not entirely to follow a fabulous geography. It is evident from Herodotus that theſe Cimmerians were antiently a powerful nation; for paſſing into Aſia (ſays that author in his Clio) they poſſeſſed themſelves of Sardis, in the time of Ardyes, the ſon of Gyges. If ſo, it is poſſible they might make ſeveral ſettlements in different parts of the world, and call thoſe ſettlements by their original name, Cimmerians, and conſequently there might be Italian, as well as Scythian Cimmerians.

It muſt be allowed, that this horrid region is well choſen for the deſcent into hell: it is deſcribed as a land of obſcurity and horrours, and happily imagined to introduce a relation concerning the realms of death and darkneſs.

Unhappy race! whom endleſs night invades,
Clouds the dull air, and wraps them round in ſhades.
The ſhip we moor on theſe obſcure abodes;
Diſ-bark the ſheep, an off'ring to the gods;
And hell-ward bending, o'er the beach deſcry
The doleſome paſſage to th' infernal ſky.
The victims, vow'd to each Tartarean pow'r,
Eurylochus and Perimedes bore.
Here open'd hell, all hell I here implor'd,
And from the ſcabbard drew the ſhining ſword;
And trenching the black earth on ev'ry ſide,
A cavern form'd, a cubit long and wide.
New wine, with honey-temper'd milk, we bring,
Then living waters from the cryſtal ſpring;
O'er theſe was ſtrew'd the conſecrated flour,
And on the ſurface ſhone the holy ſtore.

v. 31. *New wine, with honey-temper'd milk.*] The word in the original is, μελίκρατον, which (as Euſtathius obſerves) the antients conſtantly underſtood to imply a mixture of honey and milk; but all writers who ſucceeded Homer as conſtantly uſed it to ſignify a compoſition of water mixed with honey. The Latin poets have borrowed their magical rites from Homer: thus Ovid. Metam. vii. 243.

"Haud procul, egeſtâ ſcrobibus tellure duabus,
"Sacra facit cultroſque in guttur velleris atri
"Conjicit; & patulas perfundit ſanguine foſſas.
"Tum ſuper invergens tepidi carcheſia lactis
"Alteraque infundens liquidi carcheſia mellis," &c.

Thus alſo Statius:

"—— Tellure cavatâ
"Inclinat Bacchi latices, & munera verni
"Lactis, & Actæos imbres," &c.

This libation is made to all the departed ſhades; but to what purpoſe (objects Euſtathius) ſhould theſe rites be paid to the dead, when it is evident from the ſubſequent relation that they were ignorant of theſe ceremonies till they taſted the libation? He anſwers from the ancients, that they were merely honorary to the regents of the dead, Pluto and Proſerpina; and uſed to obtain their leave to have an interview with the ſhades in their dominions.

Now the wan ſhades we hail, th' infernal gods,
To ſpeed our courſe, and waft us o'er the floods:
So ſhall a barren heifer from the ſtall
Beneath the knife upon your altars fall;
So in our palace, at our ſafe return
Rich with unnumber'd gifts the pile ſhall burn;
So ſhall a ram the largeſt of the breed,
Black as theſe regions, to Tireſias bleed.
Thus ſolemn rites and holy vows we paid
To all the phantom-nations of the dead.
Then dy'd the ſheep; a purple torrent flow'd,
And all the caverns ſmok'd with ſtreaming blood.
When lo! appear'd along the duſky coaſts,
Thin, airy ſhoals of viſionary ghoſts;

v. 47. *When lo! appear'd along the duſky coaſts,*
Thin, airy ſhoals of viſionary ghoſts.]

We are informed by Euſtathius, that the antients rejected theſe ſix verſes, for ſay they, theſe are not the ſhades of perſons newly ſlain, but who have long been in theſe infernal regions: how then can their wounds be ſuppoſed ſtill to be viſible, eſpecially through their armour, when the ſoul was ſeparated from the body? Neither is this the proper place for their appearance, for the poet immediately ſubjoins, that the ghoſt of Elpenor was the firſt that he encountered in theſe regions of darkneſs. But theſe objections will be eaſily anſwered by having recourſe to the notions which the antients entertained concerning the dead; we muſt remember that they imagined that the ſoul though freed from the body had ſtill a vehicle, exactly reſembling the body; as the figure in a mould retains the reſemblance of the mould, when ſeparated from it; the body is but as a caſe to this vehicle, and it is in this vehicle that the wounds are ſaid to be viſible; this was ſuppoſed to be leſs groſs than the mortal body, and leſs ſubtil than the ſoul; ſo that whatever wounds the outward body received when living, were believed to affect this inward ſubſtance, and conſequently might be viſible after ſeparation.

It is true that the poet calls the ghoſt of Elpenor the firſt ghoſt, but this means the firſt whom he knew: Elpenor was not yet buried, and therefore was not yet received into the habitation of the dead, but wanders before the entrance of it. This is the reaſon why his ſhade is ſaid to preſent itſelf the foremoſt: it comes not up from the realm of death, but deſcends towards it from the upper world.

Fair, penſive youths, and ſoft enamour'd maids;
And wither'd elders, pale and wrinkled ſhades;
Ghaſtly with wounds the forms of warriours ſlain
Stalk'd with majeſtick port, a martial train:
Theſe and a thouſand more ſwarm'd o'er the ground,
And all the dire aſſembly ſhriek'd around.
Aſtoniſh'd at the ſight, aghaſt I ſtood,
And a cold fear ran ſhiv'ring thro' my blood;
Straight I command the ſacrifice to haſte,
Straight the flay'd victims to the flames are caſt,
And mutter'd vows, and myſtick ſong apply'd
To griſly Pluto, and his gloomy bride.

But theſe ſhades of the warriours are ſaid ſtill to wear their armour in which they were ſlain, for the poet adds that is was ſtained with blood: how is it poſſible for theſe ghoſts, which are only a ſubtil ſubſtance, not a groſs body, to wear the armour they wore in the other world? How was it conveyed to them in theſe infernal regions? All that occurs to me in anſwer to this objection is, that the poet deſcribes them ſuitably to the characters they bore in life; the warriours on earth are warriours in hell; and that he adds theſe circumſtances only to denote the manner of their death, which was in battle or by the ſword. No doubt but Homer repreſents a future ſtate according to the notions which his age entertained of it, and this ſufficiently juſtifies him as a poet, who is not obliged to write truths, but according to fame and common opinions.

But to prove theſe verſes genuine, we have the authority of Virgil: he was too ſenſible of their beauty not to adorn his poems with them. Georg. iv. 470.

"At cantu commotæ Erebi de ſedibus imis
"Umbræ ibant tenues, ſimulacraque luce carentum,
"Matres, atque viri, defunctaque corpora vitâ
"Magnanimûm heroum, pueri, innuptæque puellæ,
"Impoſitique rogis juvenes," &c.

It muſt be confeſſed that the Roman poet omits the circumſtance of the armour in his tranſlation, as being perhaps contrary to the opinions prevailing in his age; but in the ſixth book he deſcribes his heroes with arms, horſes, and infernal chariots; and in the ſtory of Deiphobus we ſee his ſhade retain the wounds in hell, which he received at the time of his death in Troy.

"——— Lacerum crudeliter ora
"Deiphobum vidi," &c.

Now ſwift I wav'd my falchion o'er the blood;
Back ſtarted the pale throngs, and trembling ſtood.
Round the black trench the gore untaſted flows,
'Till awful from the ſhades Tireſias roſe.
There, wand'ring thro' the gloom I firſt ſurvey'd,
New to the realms of death, Elpenor's ſhade:
His cold remains all naked to the ſky
On diſtant ſhores unwept, unburied lie.
Sad at the ſight I ſtand, deep fix'd in woe,
And ere I ſpoke the tears began to flow.
O ſay what angry pow'r Elpenor led
To glide in ſhades, and wander with the dead?
How could thy ſoul, by realms and ſeas disjoin'd,
Out-fly the nimble ſail, and leave the lagging wind?

v. 73. *How could thy ſoul, by realms and ſeas disjoin'd,*
Out-fly the nimble ſail?

Euſtathius is of opinion, that Ulyſſes ſpeaks pleaſantly to Elpenor, for were his words to be literally tranſlated they would be, "Elpenor, "thou art come hither on foot, ſooner than I in a ſhip." I ſuppoſe it is the worthleſs character of Elpenor that led that critick into this opinion; but I ſhould rather take the ſentence to be ſpoken ſeriouſly, not only becauſe ſuch railleries are an inſult upon the unfortunate, and levities perhaps unworthy of epick poetry, but alſo from the general conduct of Ulyſſes, who at the ſight of Elpenor burſt into tears, and compaſſionates the fate of his friend. Is there any thing in this that looks like raillery? if there be, we muſt confeſs that Ulyſſes makes a very quick tranſition from ſorrow to pleaſantry. The other is a more noble ſenſe, and therefore I have followed it, and it excellently paints the ſurpriſe of Ulyſſes at the unexpected ſight of Elpenor, and expreſſes his wonder that the ſoul, the moment it leaves the body, ſhould reach the receptacle of departed ſhades.

But it may be aſked what connexion this ſtory of Elpenor has with the ſubject of the poem, and what it contributes to the end of it? Boſſu very well anſwers that the poet may inſert ſome incidents that make no part of the fable or action; eſpecially if they be ſhort, and break not the thread of it; this before us is only a ſmall part of a large epiſode, which the poet was at liberty to inſert or omit, as contributed moſt to the beauty of his poetry: beſides, it contains an excellent moral, and ſhews us the ill effects of drunkenneſs and debauchery. The poet repreſents Elpenor as a perſon of a mean character, and puniſhes his crime with ſudden death, and diſhonour.

The ghoſt reply'd: to hell my doom I owe,
Dæmons accurſt, dire miniſters of woe!
My feet thro' wine unfaithful to their weight,
Betray'd me tumbling from a tow'ry height,
Stagg'ring I reel'd, and as I reel'd I fell,
Lux'd the neck-joint—my ſoul deſcends to hell.

I will only add that Virgil treads in the footſteps of Homer, and Miſenus in the Æneid, is the Elpenor of the Odyſſey: there is indeed ſome difference; Miſenus ſuffers for his preſumption, Elpenor for his debauchery.

v. 75. ——— *To hell my doom I owe,*
Dæmons accurſt, dire miniſters of woe.]

The words in the original are Ἀσέ με Δαίμονος αἶσα. The identity of ſound in ἆσα and αἶσα may perhaps appear a little inharmonious, and ſhock the ear. It is a known obſervation that the nice ears in the court of Auguſtus could not pardon Virgil for a like ſimilitude of cadence in this verſe.

"At regina Pyrâ"———

But theſe are rather negligencies than errours; they are indeed to be avoided, but a great genius ſometimes overlooks ſuch niceties, and ſacrifices ſound to ſenſe.

The words of Quintilian are very oppoſite to this purpoſe, lib. viii. c. 3. "Ejuſdem verbi aut ſermonis iteratio, quanquam non mag-"nopere ſummis authoribus vitata, interim vitium videri poteſt; "in quod ſæpe incidit etiam Cicero, ſecurus tam parvæ obſervationis." He brings an inſtance of it from his oration for Cluentius, "Non ſo-"lum igitur illud judicium, judicii ſimile, judices, non fuit." It muſt be confeſſed, that the ſenſe is not only darkened, but the ear ſhocked at the repetition of the ſame word in the ſame period.

This is a very pregnant inſtance, that the opinion of an evil dæmon or genius prevailed in the days of Homer: but this excuſe of Elpenor, in aſcribing his calamity to a dæmon, gives great offence to Maximus Tyrius, he being a Stoic philoſopher. He ſays Elpenor is guilty of falſhood in this excuſe to Ulyſſes: for dæmons, parcæ, &c. are nothing but the idle pretext of wicked men, who are induſtrious to transfer their own follies to the gods, according to thoſe verſes in the beginning of the Odyſſey:

Why charge mankind on heav'n their own offence,
And call their woes the crime of providence?
Blind! who themſelves their miſeries create,
And periſh by their folly, not their fate.

But lend me aid, I now conjure thee lend,
By the ſoft tie and ſacred name of friend!
By thy fond conſort! by thy father's cares!
By lov'd Telemachus's blooming years!
For well I know that ſoon the heav'nly pow'rs
Will give thee back to day, and Circe's ſhores:
There pious on my cold remains attend,
There call to mind thy poor departed friend,
The tribute of a tear is all I crave,
And the poſſeſſion of a peaceful grave.
But if unheard, in vain compaſſion plead,
Revere the gods, the gods avenge the dead!
A tomb along the wat'ry margin raiſe,
The tomb with manly arms and trophies grace,
To ſhew poſterity Elpenor was.
There high in air, memorial of my name,
Fix the ſmooth oar, and bid me live to fame.
To whom with tears; Theſe rites, oh mournful ſhade,
Due to thy ghoſt, ſhall to thy ghoſt be paid.
Still as I ſpoke the phantom ſeem'd to moan,
Tear follow'd tear, and groan ſucceeded groan.
But as my waving ſword the blood ſurrounds,
The ſhade withdrew and mutter'd empty ſounds.
There as the wond'rous viſions I ſurvey'd,
All pale aſcends my royal mother's ſhade:

v. 105. *All pale aſcends my royal mother's ſhade.*] The behaviour of Ulyſſes with reſpect to his mother may appear not ſufficiently tender and affectionate; he refrains all manner of addreſs to her, a conduct which may be cenſured as inconſiſtent with filial piety; but Plutarch very fully anſwers this objection. "It is (ſays that author) "a remarkable inſtance of the prudence of Ulyſſes, who deſcending "into the regions of the dead, refuſed all conference even with his "mother, till he had obtained an anſwer from Tireſias, concerning "the buſineſs which induced him to undertake that infernal journey." A wiſe man is not inquiſitive about things impertinent; accordingly Ulyſſes firſt ſhews himſelf a wiſe man, and then a dutiful ſon. Beſides, it is very judicious in Homer thus to deſcribe Ulyſſes: the whole deſign of the Odyſſey is the return of Ulyſſes to his country;

A queen, to Troy ſhe ſaw our legions paſs;
Now a thin form is all Anticlea was!
Struck at the ſight I melt at filial woe,
And down my cheek the pious ſorrows flow,
Yet as I ſhook my falchion o'er the blood,
Regardleſs of her ſon the parent ſtood.
When lo! the mighty Theban I behold;
To guide his ſteps he bore a ſtaff of gold;
Awful he trod! majeſtic was his look!
And from his holy lips theſe accents broke.
Why, mortal, wand'reſt thou from chearful day,
To tread the downward, melancholy way?
What angry gods to theſe dark regions led
Thee yet alive, companion of the dead?
But ſheath thy poniard, while my tongue relates
Heav'n's ſteadfaſt purpoſe, and thy future fates.

this is the mark at which the hero ſhould continually aim, and therefore it is neceſſary that all other incidents ſhould be ſubordinate to this; and the poet had been blameable if he had ſhewed Ulyſſes entertaining himſelf with amuſements, and poſtponing the conſiderations of the chief deſign of the Odyſſey. Lucian ſpeaks to the ſame purpoſe in his piece upon aſtrology.

v. 120. *But ſheath thy poniard.*———] The terrour which the ſhades of the departed expreſs at the ſight of the ſword of Ulyſſes has been frequently cenſured as abſurd and ridiculous: "Riſum cui non "moveat," ſays Scaliger, "cum enſem ait & vulnera metuiſſe?" What have the dead to fear from a ſword, who are beyond the power of it, by being reduced to an incorporeal ſhadow? But this deſcription is conſiſtent with the notions of the ancients concerning the dead. I have already remarked, that the ſhades retained a vehicle, which reſembled the body, and was liable to pain as well as the corporeal ſubſtance; if not, to what purpoſe are the furies deſcribed with iron ſcourges, or the vulture tearing the liver of Tityus?

Virgil aſcribes the like fears to the ſhades in the Æneis; for the Sibyl thus commands Æneas;

"Tuque invade viam, vaginâque eripe ferrum."

And the ſhades of the Greeks are there ſaid to fly at the ſight of his arms.

While yet he ſpoke, the prophet I obey'd,
And in the ſcabbard plung'd the glitt'ring blade:
Eager he quaff'd the gore, and then expreſt
Dark things to come, the counſels of his breaſt.
Weary of light, Ulyſſes here explores,
A proſp'rous voyage to his native ſhores;
But know—by me unerring fates diſcloſe
New trains of dangers, and new ſcenes of woes;
I ſee! I ſee, thy bark by Neptune toſt,
For injur'd Cyclops, and his eye-ball loſt!
Yet to thy woes the gods decree an end,
If heav'n thou pleaſe; and how to pleaſe attend!
Where on Trinacrian rocks the ocean roars,
Graze num'rous herds along the verdant ſhores;
Tho' hunger preſs, yet fly the dang'rous prey,
The herds are ſacred to the god of day,
Who all ſurveys with his extenſive eye
Above, below, on earth and in the ſky!
Rob not the god, and ſo propitious gales
Attend thy voyage and impel thy ſails:
But if his herds ye ſeize, beneath the waves
I ſee thy friends o'erwhelm'd in liquid graves!
The direful wreck Ulyſſes ſcarce ſurvives!
Ulyſſes at his country ſcarce arrives!

"At Danaûm proceres, Agamemnoniæque Phalanges
"Ut vidêre virum, fulgentiaque arma per umbras
"Ingenti trepidare metu."

Tireſias is here deſcribed conſiſtently with the character before given him by the poet, I mean with a pre-eminence above the other ſhades; for (as Euſtathius obſerves) he knows Ulyſſes before he taſtes the ingredients; a privilege not claimed by any other of the infernal inhabitants. Elpenor indeed did the ſame, but for another reaſon; becauſe he was not yet buried, nor entered the regions of the dead, and therefore his ſoul was yet intire.

v. 145. *Ulyſſes at his country ſcarce arrives!*] The poet conducts this interview with admirable judgment. The whole deſign of Ulyſſes is to engage the Phæacians in his favour, in order to his tranſportation to his own country: how does he bring this about? By ſhew-

Strangers thy guides! nor there thy labours end,
New foes ariſe, domeſtic ills attend!
There foul adult'rers to thy bride reſort,
And lordly gluttons riot in thy court.
But vengeance haſtes amain! theſe eyes behold
The deathful ſcene, princes on princes roll'd!
That done, a people far from ſea explore,
Who ne'er knew ſalt, or heard the billows roar,

ing that it was decreed by the gods that he ſhould be conducted thither by ſtrangers; ſo that the Phæacians immediately conclude, that they are the people deſtined by heaven to conduct him home; to give this the greater weight, he puts the ſpeech into the mouth of the prophet Tireſias, and exalts his character in an extraordinary manner, to ſtrengthen the credit of the prediction: by this method likewiſe the poet interweaves his epiſode into the texture and eſſence of the poem, he makes his journey into hell contribute to the reſtoration of his hero, and unites the ſubordinate parts very happily with the main action.

v. 152. *That done, a people far from ſea explore,*
Who ne'er knew ſalt.——]

It is certain that Tireſias ſpeaks very obſcurely, after the manner of the oracles; but the antients generally underſtood this people to be the Epirots. Thus Pauſanias in his Attics. Οἱ μηδὲ ἁλέσης ἰλίε ἁλῶσαν, μηδὲ ἅλσιν ἠπίσαντο χρῆσθαι, μαρτυρεῖ δὲ μοὶ ἡ Ὁμήρε ἐπῳ ἐν ὀδυσσείᾳ.

—— Οἱ ἒκ ἴασι θάλασσαν.

That is; "The Epirots even ſo lately as after the taking of Troy, "were ignorant of the ſea, and the uſe of ſalt, as Homer teſtifies in "his Odyſſey:"

Who ne'er knew ſalt, or heard the billows roar.

So that they who were ignorant of the ſea, were likewiſe ignorant of the uſe of ſalt, according to Homer: whence it may be conjectured, that the poet knew of no ſalt but what was made of ſea-water. The other token of their ignorance of the ſea was, that they ſhould not know an oar, but call it a corn-van. This verſe was once ſarcaſtically applied to Philip of Macedon by Amerdion a Grecian, who flying from him and being apprehended, was aſked whither he fled? He bravely anſwered, to find a people who knew not Philip.

Εἴσοκε τὺς ἀφίκωμαι, οἳ ἒκ ἴασι Φίλιππον.

Or ſaw gay veſſel ſtem the wat'ry plain,
A painted wonder flying on the main!
Bear on thy back an oar: with ſtrange amaze
A ſhepherd meeting thee, the oar ſurveys,
And names a van: there fix it on the plain,
To calm the god that holds the wat'ry reign;
A threefold off'ring to his altar bring,
A bull, a ram, a boar; and hail the ocean king.
But home return'd, to each ætherial pow'r
Slay the due victim in the genial hour:
So peaceful ſhalt thou end thy bliſsful days,
And ſteal thyſelf from life by ſlow decays:
Unknown to pain, in age reſign thy breath,
When late ſtern Neptune points the ſhaft with death:

I perſuade myſelf that this paſſage is rightly tranſlated; Νέας φοινικοπαρῄους and τὰ τε πολλὰ ἱστοὶ πέλονται,

A painted wonder, flying on the main,

for the wings of the ſhip ſignify the ſails, (as Euſtathius remarks) and not the oars, as we might be miſled to conclude from the immediate connexion with ἐρετμὰ, or oars. The poet, I believe, intended to expreſs the wonder of a perſon upon his firſt ſight of a ſhip, who obſerving it to move ſwiftly along the ſeas, might miſtake the ſails for wings, according to that beautiful deſcription of Mr. Dryden upon a like occaſion in his Indian Emperor.

The objects I could firſt diſtinctly view,
Were tall ſtraight trees which on the waters flew;
Wings on their ſides inſtead of leaves did grow,
Which gather'd all the breath the winds could blow;
And at their roots grew floating palaces, &c.

Euſtathius tells us the reaſon of this command given to Ulyſſes, to ſearch out a people ignorant of the ſea; it was in honour of Neptune, to make his name regarded by a nation which was entirely a ſtranger to that deity; and this injunction was laid by way of atonement for the violence offered to his ſon Polyphemus.

Many critics have imagined that this paſſage is corrupted; but, as Euſtathius obſerves, we have the authority of Sophocles to prove it genuine, who alluding to this paſſage, writes,

Ὦμοις ἀθηρόδρωτον ὤρσανον φέρων.

v. 167. *When late ſtern Neptune points the ſhaft with death.*] The death of Ulyſſes is related variouſly, but the following account is

To the dark grove retiring as to reſt,
Thy people bleſſing, by thy people bleſt!
Unerring truths, oh man, my lips relate;
This is thy life to come, and this is fate.
To whom unmov'd: if this the gods prepare;
What heav'n ordains, the wiſe with courage bear.
But ſay, why yonder on the lonely ſtrands,
Unmindful of her ſon, Anticlea ſtands?
Why to the ground ſhe bends her downcaſt eye?
Why is ſhe ſilent, while her ſon is nigh?
The latent cauſe, oh ſacred ſeer reveal!
Nor this, replies the ſeer, will I conceal.
Know; to the ſpectres, that thy bev'rage taſte,
The ſcenes of life recur, and actions paſt;
They, ſeal'd with truth, return the ſure reply;
The reſt, repell'd, a train oblivious fly.

chiefly credited: Ulyſſes had a ſon by Circe named Telegonus, who being grown to years of maturity, ſailed to Ithaca in ſearch of his father; where ſeizing ſome ſheep for the uſe of his attendants, the ſhepherds put themſelves into a poſture to reſcue them; Ulyſſes being advertiſed of it, went with his ſon Telemachus to repel Telegonus, who in defending himſelf wounded Ulyſſes, not knowing him to be his father. Thus Oppian, Hyginus, and Dictys relate the ſtory. Many poets have brought this upon the ſtage, and Ariſtotle criticizing upon one of theſe tragedies gives us the title of it, which was, "Ulyſſes Wounded." But if Ulyſſes thus died, how can Neptune be ſaid to "point the ſhaft with death?" We are informed that the ſpear with which Telegonus gave the wound was pointed with the bone of a ſea turtle; ſo that literally his death came from the ſea, or ἐξ ἁλὸς: and Neptune being the god of the ocean, his death may without violence be aſcribed to that deity. It is true, ſome critics read ἐξαλὸς as one word, and then it will ſignify that Ulyſſes ſhould eſcape the dangers of the ſea, and die upon the continent far from it; but the former ſenſe is moſt conſonant to the tenour of the poem, through which Neptune is conſtantly repreſented as an enemy to Ulyſſes.

I will only add the reaſon why Ulyſſes is injoined to offer a bull, a ram, and a boar to Neptune: the bull repreſents the roaring of the ſea in ſtorms; the ram the milder appearance of it when in tranquillity: the boar was uſed by the ancients as an emblem of fecundity, to repreſent the fruitfulneſs of the ocean. This particular ſacrifice of three animals was called τριτύα. Euſtathius.

The phantom-prophet ceas'd, and ſunk from ſight
To the black palace of eternal night.
Still in the dark abodes of death I ſtood,
When near Anticlea mov'd, and drank the blood.
Straight all the mother in her ſoul awakes,
And owning her Ulyſſes, thus ſhe ſpeaks.
Com'ſt thou, my ſon, alive, to realms beneath,
The doleſome realms of darkneſs and of death:
Com'ſt thou alive from pure, ætherial day?
Dire is the region, diſmal is the way!
Here lakes profound, there floods oppoſe their waves,
There the wide ſea with all his billows raves!
Or (ſince to duſt proud Troy ſubmits her tow'rs)
Com'ſt thou a wand'rer from the Phrygian ſhores?
Or ſay, ſince honour call'd thee to the field,
Haſt thou thy Ithaca, thy bride beheld?

v. 195. *There the wide ſea with all his billows raves*] If this paſſage were literally tranſlated, it would run thus: "My ſon, how "didſt thou arrive at this place of darkneſs, when ſo many rivers, and the ocean lie in the midway?" This (ſays Euſtathius) plainly ſhews that Homer uſes a fabulous geography; for whereas the places that are mentioned in theſe voyages of Ulyſſes are really ſituated upon the Mediterranean, Anticlea here ſays that they lie in the middle of the ocean. But this is undoubtedly an errour: the whole of the obſervation depends upon the word μέσσῳ; but why muſt this denote the "midway" ſo exactly? Is it not ſufficient to ſay, that, "between" Ithaca and this infernal region, rivers and the ocean roll? and that this is the real meaning is evident from this book; for Ulyſſes ſails in the ſpace of one day from the iſland of Circe to the place where he deſcends: how then could theſe places where Ulyſſes touches in his voyage lie in the middle of the ocean, unleſs we can ſuppoſe he paſſed half the ocean in one day? The poet directly affirms, that he deſcends at the extremity of it; but this extremity is no more than one day's voyage from the iſland of Circe, and conſequently that iſland could not lie in the middle of the ocean: therefore this place is no evidence that Homer uſes a fabulous geography.

Euſtathius very juſtly obſerves, that Homer judiciouſly places the deſcent into hell at the extremity of the ocean: for it is natural to imagine that to be the only paſſage to it, by which the ſun and the ſtars themſelves appear to deſcend, and ſink into the realms of darkneſs.

Source of my life, I cry'd, from earth I fly
To ſeek Tireſias in the nether ſky,
To learn my doom: for toſt from woe to woe,
In ev'ry land Ulyſſes finds a foe:
Nor have theſe eyes beheld my native ſhores,
Since in the duſt proud Troy ſubmits her tow'rs.
But, when thy ſoul from her ſweet manſion fled,
Say, what diſtemper gave thee to the dead?
Has life's fair lamp declin'd by ſlow decays,
Or ſwift expir'd it in a ſudden blaze?
Say, if my ſire, good old Laertes, lives?
If yet Telemachus my ſon, ſurvives?
Say, by his rule is my dominion aw'd,
Or cruſh'd by traitors with an iron rod?
Say, if my ſpouſe maintains her royal truſt,
Tho' tempted chaſte, and obſtinately juſt?
Or if no more her abſent lord ſhe wails,
But the falſe woman o'er the wife prevails?
Thus I, and thus the parent-ſhade returns.
Thee, ever thee, thy faithful conſort mourns:
Whether the night deſcends, or day prevails,
Thee ſhe by night, and thee by day bewails,

v. 218. —— *Thus the parent ſhade returns*] The queſtions which Ulyſſes aſks (remarks Euſtathius) could not fail of having a very good effect upon his Phæacian audience: by them he very artfully (and, as it ſeems, undeſignedly) lets them into the knowledge of his dignity, and ſhews the importance of his perſon; to induce them to a greater care to conduct him to his country. The proceſs of the whole ſtory is ſo artfully carried on, that Ulyſſes ſeems only to relate an accidental interview, while he tacitly recommends himſelf, and lets them know the perſon who aſks their aſſiſtance is a king. It is obſervable that Anticlea inverts the order in her anſwer, and replies laſt to the firſt queſtion. Orators always reſerve the ſtrongeſt argument for the concluſion, to leave it freſh upon the memory of their auditors; or rather, the poet uſes this method to introduce the ſorrow of Ulyſſes for the death of his mother more naturally: he deals away the mind of the reader from attending the main action, to enliven it with a ſcene of tenderneſs and affection in theſe regions of horrour.

Thee in Telemachus thy realm obeys;
In ſacred groves celeſtial rites he pays,
And ſhares the banquet in ſuperiour ſtate,
Grac'd with ſuch honours as become the great.
Thy fire in ſolitude foments his care:
The court is joyleſs, for thou art not there!
No coſtly carpets raiſe his hoary head,
No rich embroid'ry ſhines to grace his bed:
Ev'n when keen winter freezes in the ſkies,
Rank'd with his ſlaves, on earth the monarch lies,
Deep are his ſighs, his viſage pale, his dreſs
The garb of woe and habit of diſtreſs.
And when the autumn takes his annual round,
The leafy honours ſcatt'ring on the ground;
Regardleſs of his years, abroad he lies,
His bed the leaves, his canopy the ſkies.
Thus cares on cares his painful days conſume,
And bow his age with ſorrow to the tomb!
For thee my ſon, I wept my life away;
For thee thro' hell's eternal dungeons ſtray:
Nor came my fate by ling'ring pains and ſlow,
Nor bent the ſilver-ſhafted queen her bow;

v. 224. *And ſhares the banquet in ſuperiour ſtate*, &c.] This paſſage is fully explained by Euſtathius: he tells us, that it was an antient cuſtom to invite kings and legiſlators to all public feaſts; this was to do them honour: and the chief ſeat was always reſerved for the chief magiſtrate. Without this obſervation, the lines are unintelligible. It is evident the words are not ſpoken of ſacrifices or feaſts made to the gods, but ſocial entertainments, for they are general, πάντες καλέυσι, "all the people of the realm invite Telema-"chus to their feaſts." And this ſeems to have been a right due to the chief magiſtrate, for ἀλεγίνειν implies it, which word Euſtathius explains by ἐν λόγῳ ποιεῖσθαι; "ſuch an honour as ought not to be "neglected," or

Grac'd with ſuch honours as become the great.

It gives a very happy image of thoſe ages of the world, when we obſerve ſuch an intercourſe between the king and the ſubject: the idea of power carries no terrour in it, but the ruler himſelf makes a part of the public joy.

No dire diſeaſe bereav'd me of my breath ;
Thou, thou my ſon wert my diſeaſe and death ;
Unkindly with my love my ſon conſpir'd,
For thee I liv'd, for abſent thee expir'd.
Thrice in my arms I ſtrove her ſhade to bind,
Thrice thro' my arms ſhe ſlipt like empty wind,
Or dreams, the vain illuſions of the mind.
Wild with deſpair, I ſhed a copious tide
Of flowing tears, and thus with ſighs reply'd.
Fly'ſt thou, lov'd ſhade, while I thus fondly mourn ?
Turn to my arms, to my embraces turn !
Is it, ye pow'rs that ſmile at human harms !
Too great a bliſs to weep within her arms ?

v. 248. *Thrice in my arms I ſtrove her ſhade to bind,*
Thrice thro' my arms——]

This paſſage plainly ſhews that the vehicles of the departed were believed by the ancients to be an aerial ſubſtance, and retain nothing of corporeal groſſneſs.

Virgil has borrowed theſe verſes.

" Ter conatus ibi collo dare brachia circum ;
" Ter fruſtra comprenſa manus effugit imago,
" Par levibus ventis, volucrique ſimillima ſomno."

Scaliger gives the preference to the Roman poet, becauſe he uſes three verſes, at a time when the word " ter" occurs in the deſcription, whereas Homer concludes in little more than two lines. But this is not criticizing, but trifling ; and aſcribing to an author what the author himſelf had no thought of. This puts me in mind of a ſtory in Lucian, where a perſon of a ſtrong imagination, thinking there was a myſtery in μῆνιν, the firſt word in the Iliad, is introduced enquiring of Homer in the regions of the dead, why he placed it in the beginning of his poem ? he anſwers, Becauſe it firſt came into his head. I doubt not but the number of the lines in this place in both poets was equally accidental ; Virgil adds nothing to the thought of Homer, though he uſes more words.

v. 256. ——*A bliſs to weep within her arms.*] This is almoſt a literal tranſlation ; the words in the Greek are τέλαρπόμεσθα γόοιο or " that we may delight ourſelves with ſorrow," which Euſtathius, explains by ſaying, " there is a pleaſure in weeping :" I ſhould rather underſtand the words to ſignify, that in the inſtant while he is rejoicing at the ſight of his mother, he is compelled to turn his joy into tears, to find the whole ſcene a deluſion.

Or has hell's queen an empty image ſent,
That wretched I might ev'n my joys lament?
O ſon of woe, the penſive ſhade rejoin'd,
Oh moſt inur'd to grief of all mankind!
'Tis not the queen of hell who thee deceives:
All, all are ſuch, when life the body leaves:
No more the ſubſtance of the man remains,
Nor bounds the blood along the purple veins:
Theſe the funereal flames in atoms bear,
To wander with the wind in empty air;
While the impaſſive ſoul reluctant flies,
Like a vain dream, to theſe infernal ſkies.
But from the dark dominions ſpeed thy way,
And climb the ſteep aſcent to upper day;
To thy chaſte bride the wond'rous ſtory tell,
The woes, the horrours, and the laws of hell.
Thus while ſhe ſpoke, in ſwarms hell's empreſs brings
Daughters and wives of heroes and of kings;
Thick, and more thick they gather round the blood,
Ghoſt throng'd on ghoſt (a dire aſſembly) ſtood!
Dauntleſs my ſword I ſeize: the airy crew,
Swift as it flaſh'd along the gloom, withdrew;
Then ſhade to ſhade in mutual forms ſucceeds,
Her race recounts, and their illuſtrious deeds.

v. 279. *Then ſhade to ſhade —— ſucceeds.*] Nothing can better ſhew the invention of Homer, than his capacity of furniſhing out a ſcene of ſuch great variety in this infernal region. He calls up the heroes of former ages from a ſtate of exiſtence to adorn and diverſify his poetry. If it be aſked what relation this journey into hell has to the main action of the Odyſſey? the anſwer is, It has an epiſodic affinity with it, and ſhews the ſufferings of Ulyſſes more than any of his voyages upon the ocean, as it is more horrible and full of terrours. What a treaſury of antient hiſtory and fables has he opened by this deſcent? He lets us into a variety of different characters of the moſt famous perſonages recorded in ancient ſtory; and at the ſame time lays before us a ſupplement to the Iliad. If Virgil paid a happy piece of flattery to the Romans, by introducing the greateſt perſons of the beſt families in Rome, in his deſcent in the Æneid; Homer no leſs happily intereſts the Grecians in his ſtory, by honouring the anceſtors

Tyro began: whom great Salmoneus bred;
The royal partner of fam'd Cretheus' bed.
For fair Enipeus, as from fruitful urns
He pours his wat'ry ſtore, the virgin burns;

of the nobleſt families who ſtill flouriſhed in Greece, in the Odyſſey; a circumſtance that could not fail of being very acceptable to a Grecian or Roman reader, but perhaps leſs entertaining to us, who have no particular intereſt in theſe ſtories.

v. 281. *Tyro —— whom great Salmoneus bred.*] Virgil gives a very different character of Salmoneus from this of Homer: he deſcribes him as an impious perſon who preſumed to imitate the thunder of Jupiter, whereas Homer ſtiles him blameleſs, or ἀμύμων; an argument, ſays Euſtathius, that the preceding ſtory is a fable invented ſince the days of Homer. This may perhaps be true, and we may naturally conclude it to be true from his ſilence of it, but not from the epithet ἀμύμων; for in the firſt book of the Odyſſey, Jupiter gives the ſame appellation to Ægyſthus, even while he condemns him of murder and adultery. Euſtathius adds, that Salmoneus was a great proficient in mechanics, and inventor of a veſſel called βροντεῖον, which imitated thunder by rolling ſtones in it, which gave occaſion to the fictions of the poets.

v. 283. *For fair Enipeus, as from fruitful urns*
He pours his wat'ry ſtore, the virgin burns.]

There are no fables in the poets that ſeem more bold than theſe concerning the commerce between women and river gods; but Euſtathius gives us a probable ſolution: I will tranſlate him literally. It was cuſtomary for young virgins to reſort frequently to rivers to bathe in them; and the ancients have very well explained theſe fables about the intercourſe between them and the water gods: "Receive my virginity, O Scamander! ſays a lady; but it is very apparent who this Scamander was: her lover Cimon lay concealed in the reeds. This was a good excuſe for female frailty, in ages of credulity: for ſuch imaginary intercourſe between the fair ſex and deities was not only believed, but eſteemed honourable. No doubt the ladies were frequently deceived; their lovers perſonated the deities, and they took a Cimon to their arms in the diſguiſe of a Scamander.

It is uncertain where this Enipeus flows: Strabo (ſays Euſtathius) imagines it to be a river of Peloponneſus, that diſembogues its waters into the Alpheus; for the Theſſalian river is Eniſeus, and not Enipeus: this riſes from mount Othrys, and receives into it the Epidanus. The former ſeems to be the river intended by Homer, for it takes its ſource from a village called Salmone; and what ſtrengthens

Smooth flows the gentle ſtream with wanton pride,
And in ſoft mazes rolls a ſilver tide.
As on his banks the maid enamour'd roves,
The monarch of the deep beholds and loves;
In her Enipeus' form and borrow'd charms,
The am'rous god deſcends into her arms:
Around, a ſpacious arch of waves he throws,
And high in air the liquid mountain roſe;
Thus in ſurrounding floods conceal'd he proves
The pleaſing tranſport, and compleats his loves.
Then ſoftly ſighing, he the fair addreſt,
And as he ſpoke her tender hand he preſt.
Hail, happy nymph! no vulgar births are ow'd
To the prolific raptures of a god:
Lo! when nine times the moon renews her horn,
Two brother heroes ſhall from thee be born;
Thy early care the future worthies claim,
To point them to the arduous paths of fame;
But in thy breaſt th' important truth conceal,
Nor dare the ſecret of a god reveal:
For know, thou Neptune view'ſt! and at my nod
Earth trembles, and the waves confeſs their god.
He added not, but mounting ſpurn'd the plain,
Then plung'd into the chambers of the main.
Now in the time's full proceſs forth ſhe brings
Jove's dread vicegerents, in two future kings;
O'er proud Iolcos Pelias ſtretch'd his reign,
And god-like Neleus rul'd the Pylian plain:
Then fruitful, to her Cretheus' royal bed
She gallant Pheres and fam'd Æſon bred:
From the ſame fountain Amythaon roſe,
Pleas'd with the din of war, and noble ſhout of foes.

this conjecture is the neighbourhood of the ocean (or Neptune in this fable) to that river. Lucian has made this ſtory of Enipeus the ſubject of one of his dialogues.

There mov'd Antiope with haughty charms,
Who bleſt th' almighty Thund'rer in her arms:
Hence ſprung Amphion, hence brave Zethus came,
Founders of Thebes, and men of mighty name;
Tho' bold in open field, they yet ſurround
The town with walls, and mound inject on mound;
Here ramparts ſtood, there tow'rs roſe high in air,
And there thro' ſev'n wide portals ruſh'd the war.
There with ſoft ſtep the fair Alcmena trod,
Who bore Alcides to the thund'ring god;

v. 319. *Hence ſprung Amphion,* ——] The fable of Thebes built by the power of muſic is not mentioned by Homer, and therefore may be ſuppoſed to be of later invention. Homer relates many circumſtances in theſe ſhort hiſtories differently from his ſucceſſors; Epicaſte is called Jocaſta, and the tragedians have entirely varied the ſtory of Oedipus: they tell us he tore out his eyes, that he was driven from Thebes, and being conducted by his daughter Antigone, arrived at Athens, where entering the temple of the furies, he died in the midſt of a furious ſtorm, and was carried by it into hell: whereas Homer directly affirms, that he continued to reign in Thebes after all his calamities.

It is not eaſy to give a reaſon why the mother, and not the father, is ſaid to ſend the furies to torment Oedipus, eſpecially becauſe he was the murderer of his father Laius: Euſtathius anſwers that it was by accident that he ſlew Laius; but upon the diſcovery of his wickedneſs in marrying his mother Jocaſta, he uſed her with more barbarity and rigour than was neceſſary, and therefore ſhe purſues him with her vengeance. Jocaſta and Dido both die after the ſame manner by their own hands: I agree with Scaliger, that Virgil has deſcribed hanging more happily than Homer.

" Informis Lethi nodum trabe nectit ab altâ."

Ἀψαμένη βρόχον αἰπὺν ἀφ' ὑψηλοῖο μελάθρου.

There is nothing like the " Informis Lethi nodus" in Homer: and as that critic obſerves, " tam atrox res aliquo verborum ambitu ſtu- " dioſus comprehendenda fuit." The ſtory of Oedipus is this; Laius being informed by the oracle, that he ſhould be ſlain by his ſon, cauſed Oedipus immediately to be expoſed by his ſhepherds to wild beaſts; but the ſhepherds preſerved him, and gave him education: when he came to years of maturity he went towards Thebes in ſearch of his father, but meeting Laius by the way, and a quarrel ariſing, he ſlew him ignorantly, and married Jocaſta his mother. This is the ſubject of two tragedies in Sophocles.

And Megara, who charm'd the ſon of Jove,
And ſoften'd his ſtern ſoul to tender love.
Sullen and ſour with diſcontented mien
Jocaſta frown'd, th' inceſtous Theban queen;
With her own ſon ſhe join'd in nuptial bands,
Tho' father's blood imbru'd his murd'rous hands:
The gods and men the dire offence deteſt,
The gods with all their furies rend his breaſt:
In lofty Thebes he wore th' imperial crown,
A pompous wretch! accurs'd upon a throne.
The wife ſelf-murder'd from a beam depends,
And her foul ſoul to blackeſt hell deſcends;
Thence to her ſon the choiceſt plagues ſhe brings,
And the fiends haunt him with a thouſand ſtings.
And now the beauteous Chloris I deſcry,
A lovely ſhade, Amphion's youngeſt joy!
With gifts unnumber'd Neleus ſought her arms,
Nor paid too dearly for unequall'd charms;
Great in Orchomenos, in Pylos great,
He ſway'd the ſcepter with imperial ſtate.
Three gallant ſons the joyful monarch told,
Sage Neſtor, Periclimenus the bold,

v. 341. ——— *The beauteous Chloris I deſcry,*] A critic ought not only to endeavour to point out the beauties in the ſenſe, but alſo in the verſification of a poet: Dionyſius Halicarnaſſus cites theſe two verſes as peculiarly flowing and harmonious.

Καὶ Χλῶριν εἶδον περιμαλλέα, τὴν ποτὲ Νελεὺς
Γῆμεν ἑὸν διὰ Κάλλος, ἐπεὶ πόρε μύρια ἕνδα.

There is not one eliſion, nor one rough vowel or conſonant, but they flow along with the utmoſt ſmoothneſs, and the beauty of the muſe equals that of Chloris.

v. 345. *Great in Orchomenos,* ———] This is a very conſiderable city lying between Bœotia and Phocis, upon the river Cephiſus: Homer calls it the Minyan Orchomenos, becauſe the Minyans an antient people inhabited it: it was the colony of theſe Minyans that ſailed to Iolcos, and gave name to the Argonauts. Euſtathius.

v. 348. ——— *Periclimenus the bold.*] The reaſon why Homer gives this epithet to Periclimenus may be learned from Heſiod;

And Chromius laſt ; but of the ſofter race,
One nymph alone, a miracle of grace.
Kings on their thrones for lovely Pero burn,
The fire denies, and kings rejected mourn.
To him alone the beauteous prize he yields,
Whoſe arm ſhould raviſh from Phylacian fields
The herds of Iphyclus, detain'd in wrong ;
Wild, furious herds, unconquerably ſtrong !
This dares a ſeer, but nought the ſeer prevails,
In beauty's cauſe illuſtriouſly he fails ;

Neptune gave him the power to change himſelf into all ſhapes, but he was ſlain by Hercules : Periclimenus aſſaulted that hero in the ſhape of a bee, or fly, who diſcovering him in that diſguiſe, by the means of Pallas ſlew him with his club. This is the perſon of whom Ovid ſpeaks, but adds that he was ſlain in the ſhape of an eagle by Hercules.

" Mira Piriclimeni mors eſt, cui poſſe figuras
" Sumere quas vellet, rurſuſque reponere ſumptas,
" Neptunus dederat," &c.

Euphorion ſpeaks of him in the ſhape of a bee or fly.

——Ἀλλοῖς δ' αὖτε μελισσάων ἀγλαὰ φῦλα
Ἀλλοῖς δεινὸς Ὄφις——

v. 357. *This dares a ſeer*, &c.] This ſtory is related with great obſcurity, but we learn from the xvth book that the name of this prophet was Melampus. Iphyclus was the ſon of Deioneus, and uncle to Tyro; he had ſeized upon the goods of Tyro the mother of Neleus, among which were many beautiful oxen : theſe Neleus demands, but is unjuſtly denied by Iphyclus : Neleus had a daughter named Pero, a great beauty, who was courted by all the neighbouring princes, but the father refuſes her unleſs to the man who recovers theſe oxen from Iphyclus : Bias was in love with Pero, and perſuades his brother Melampus a prophet to undertake the recovery ; he attempts it, but being vanquiſhed, is thrown into priſon ; but at laſt ſet at liberty, for telling Iphyclus, who was childleſs, how to procure iſſue. Iphyclus upon this gave him the oxen for a reward.

Nothing can be more ridiculous than the explanation of this ſtory in Euſtathius, which I will lay before the reader for his entertainment. Melampus, after he was made a priſoner, was truſted to the care of a man and a woman ; the man uſed him with mercy, and the woman with cruelty : one day he heard a low noiſe and a family of worms in conference. (He underſtood the language of all the animal

Twelve moons the foe the captive youth detains
In painful dungeons, and coercive chains;
The foe at laſt, from durance where he lay,
His art revering, gave him back to day;
Won by prophetic knowledge, to fulfill
The ſteadfaſt purpoſe of th' almighty will.
With graceful port advancing now I ſpy'd
Leda the fair, the god-like Tyndar's bride:
Hence Pollux ſprung who wields with furious ſway
The dreadful gauntlet, matchleſs in the fray:
And Caſtor glorious on th' embattled plain
Curbs the proud ſteed, reluctant to the rein:
By turns they viſit this ætherial ſky,
And live alternate, and alternate die:

creation, beaſts and reptiles.) Theſe worms were diſcourſing how they had eaten through a great beam that lay over the head of Melampus: he immediately provides for his own ſafety, feigns a ſickneſs, and begs to be carried into the freſh air: the woman and the man immediately comply with this requeſt; at which inſtant the beam falling, kills the woman: an account of this is forthwith carried to Iphyclus, who ſending for Melampus, aſks who he is? he tells him, a prophet, and that he came for the oxen of Neleus: Iphyclus commands him to declare how he may have an heir? Melampus kills an ox, and calls all the birds in the air to feaſt on it; they all appear except the vulture; he propoſes the caſe to them, but they give no ſatisfactory anſwer; at laſt the vulture appears, and gives Melampus a full information: upon this Iphyclus obtains a child, and Melampus the oxen of Neleus.

v. 364. *The ſteadfaſt purpoſe of th' almighty will.*] Theſe words διὸς ἐτελείετο βουλὴ, ſeem to come in without any connexion with the ſtory, and conſequently unneceſſarily; but Homer ſpeaks of it conciſely, as an adventure well known in his times, and therefore not wanting a further explication: but Apollodorus relates the whole at large, lib. i. The reaſon why theſe words are inſerted is, to inform us that there were antient prophecies concerning Iphyclus, that it was decreed by Jupiter he ſhould have no children till he had recourſe to a prophet, who explaining theſe prophecies to him, ſhould ſhew him how to obtain that bleſſing: in this ſenſe the will of Jupiter may be ſaid to be fulfilled.

v. 372. *And live alternate, and alternate die.*] Caſtor and Pollux are called Διόσκωροι, or the "ſons of Jupiter;" but what could give occaſion to this fiction, of their living and dying alternately? Euſtathius informs us that it is a phyſical allegory: they repreſent

In hell beneath, on earth, in heav'n above
Reign the twin-gods, the fav'rite ſons of Jove.
There Ephimedia trod the gloomy plain,
Who charm'd the monarch of the boundleſs main;
Hence Ephialtes, hence ſtern Otus ſprung,
More fierce than giants, more than giants ſtrong;
The earth o'erburthen'd groan'd beneath their weight,
None but Orion e'er ſurpaſs'd their height:
The wond'rous youths had ſcarce nine winters told,
When high in air, tremendous to behold,
Nine ells aloft they rear'd their tow'ring head,
And full nine cubits broad their ſhoulders ſpread.

the two hemiſpheres of the world; the one of which is continually enlightened by the ſun, and conſequently the other is then in darkneſs: and theſe being ſucceſſively illuminated according to the order of the day and night, one of theſe ſons of Jupiter may be ſaid to revive when one part of the world riſes into day, and the other to die, when it deſcends into darkneſs. What makes this allegory the more probable is, that Jupiter denotes, in many allegories of Homer, the air, or the upper regions of it.

v. 383. *Nine ells aloft they rear'd their tow'ring head*] This is undoubtedly a very bold fiction, and has been cenſured by ſome critics as monſtrous, and praiſed by others as ſublime. It may ſeem utterly incredible that any human creature could be nine ells, that is, eleven yards and a quarter in height, at the age of nine years. But it may vindicate Homer as a poet to ſay that he only made uſe of a fable, that had been tranſmitted down from the earlieſt times of the world; for ſo early the war between the gods and giants was ſuppoſed to be. There might a rational account be given of theſe apparent incredibilities; if I might be allowed to ſay what many authors of great name have conjectured, that theſe ſtories are only traditional, and all founded upon the ejection of the fallen angels from heaven, and the wars they had with the good angels to regain their ſtations; if this might be allowed, we ſhall then have real giants, who endeavoured to take heaven by aſſault; then nothing can be invented by a poet ſo boldly, as to exceed what may juſtly be believed of theſe beings: then the ſtories of heaping mountain upon mountain will come within the bounds of credibility. But without having recourſe to this ſolution, Longinus brings this paſſage as an inſtance of true ſublimity, chap. vi. He is proving that the ſublime is ſometimes found without the pathetic, for ſome paſſions are mean, as fear, ſadneſs, ſorrow, and conſequently incapable of ſublimity;

Proud of their ſtrength and more than mortal ſize,
The gods they challenge, and affect the ſkies;
Heav'd on Olympus tott'ring Oſſa ſtood;
On Oſſa, Pelion nods with all his wood:

and on the other hand, there are many things great and ſublime, in which there is no paſſion; of this kind is what Homer ſays concerning Otus and Ephialtes, with ſo much boldneſs.

The gods they challenge, and affect the ſkies.

And what he adds concerning the ſucceſs of theſe giants is ſtill bolder.

Had they to manhood grown, the bright abodes
Of heav'n had ſhook, and gods been heap'd on gods.

Virgil was of the opinion of Longinus, for he has imitated Homer.

"Hic & Aloidas geminos immania vidi
"Corpora, qui manibus magnum reſcindere cœlum
"Aggreſſi, ſuperiſque Jovem detrudere regnis."

Macrobius, lib. v. Saturn. cap. xiii. judges theſe verſes to be inferiour to Homer's in majeſty; in Homer we have the height and breadth of theſe giants, and he happily paints the very ſize of their limbs in the run of his poetry; two words, ἐννέωροι, and ἐννεαπήχεες, almoſt make one verſe, deſignedly choſen to expreſs their bulk in the turn of the words; but Virgil ſays only "immania corpora," and makes no addition concerning the giants, omitting entirely the circumſtance of their ſize: Homer relates the piling hill upon hill; Virgil barely adds, that they endeavoured to ſtorm the heavens.

Scaliger is firm and faithful to Virgil, and vindicates his favourite in the true ſpirit of criticiſm. I perſuade myſelf he glances at Macrobius, for he cavils at thoſe inſtances which he produces as beauties in Homer; I give his anſwer in his own words. "Admirantur "Græculi pueriles menſuras; nimis ſæpe cogor exclamare, aliud "eſſe Græculum circulatorem, aliud regiæ orationis authorem: in- "dignam cenſuit ſuâ majeſtate Virgilius hanc minutam ſuperſti- "tionem, &c."

Euſtathius remarks that the ancients greatly admired the exact proportion of theſe giants, for the body is of a due ſymmetry, when the thickneſs is three degrees leſs than the height of it. According to this account the giants grew one cubit every year in bulk, and three in height. Homer ſays, that they fell by the ſhafts of Apollo, that is, they died ſuddenly; but other writers relate, that as they were hunting, Diana ſent a ſtag between them, at which both at once aiming their weapons, and ſhe withdrawing the ſtag, they fell by their own darts. Euſtathius.

Such were thy youths! had they to manhood grown,
Almighty Jove had trembled on his throne.
But ere the harveſt of the beard began
To briſtle on the chin, and promiſe man,
His ſhafts Apollo aim'd; at once they ſound,
And ſtretch the giant-monſters o'er the ground.
There mournful Phædra with ſad Procris moves,
Both beauteous ſhades, both hapleſs in their loves;
And near them walk'd, with ſolemn pace and ſlow,
Sad Ariadne, partner of their woe;
The royal Minos Ariadne bred,
She Theſeus lov'd; from Crete with Theſeus fled;
Swift to the Dian iſle the hero flies,
And tow'rds his Athens bears the lovely prize;

v. 387. ——*On Olympus tott'ring Oſſa ſtood*, &c.] Strabo takes notice of the judgment of Homer, in placing the mountains in this order; they all ſtand in Macedonia; Olympus is the largeſt, and therefore he makes it the baſis upon which Oſſa ſtands, that being the next to Olympus in magnitude, and Pelion being the leaſt is placed above Oſſa, and thus they riſe pyramidically. Virgil follows a different regulation;

" Ter ſunt conati imponere Pelion Oſſæ
" Scilicet atque Oſſæ frondoſum imponere Olympum."

Here the largeſt mountain is placed uppermoſt, not ſo naturally as in the order of Homer. There is a peculiar beauty in the former of theſe verſes, in which Virgil makes the two vowels in " conati im- " ponere." meet without an eliſion, to expreſs the labour and ſtraining of the giants in heaving mountain upon mountain. I appeal to the ear of every reader, if he can pronounce theſe two words without a pauſe and ſtop; the difficulty in the flow of the verſe excellently repreſents the labour of the giants ſtraining to ſhove Pelion upon Oſſa. Dacier remarks that Virgil follows the ſituation of the mountains, without regarding the magnitude; thus Pelion lies firſt on the north of Macedonia, Oſſa is the ſecond, and the third Olympus; but ſhe prefers Homer's method as moſt rational.

v. 402. *And tow'rds his Athens bears the lovely prize.*] Homer juſtifies Theſeus from any crime with relation to Ariadne, he is guilty of no infidelity as ſucceeding poets affirm; ſhe died ſuddenly in Dia, or Naxos (an iſland lying between Thera and Crete;) Diana ſlew her at the inſtigation of Bacchus, who accuſed her to that goddeſs, for profaning her temple by too free an intercourſe

There Bacchus with fierce rage Diana fires,
The goddeſs aims her ſhaft, the nymph expires.
There Clymenè and Mera I behold,
There Eriphylè weeps, who looſely ſold
Her lord, her honour, for the luſt of gold.
But ſhould I all recount, the night would fail,
Unequal to the melancholy tale:
And all-compoſing reſt my nature craves,
Here in the court, or yonder on the waves;
In you I truſt, and in the heav'nly pow'rs,
To land Ulyſſes on his native ſhores.
He ceas'd: but left ſo charming on their ear
His voice, that liſt'ning ſtill they ſeem'd to hear.

with Theſeus; this Homer calls μαίνεσθαι Διονύσῳ. Clymene was a daughter of Mynias, Mæra of Prœtus and Antæa, who having made a vow to Diana of perpetual virginity, broke it; and therefore fell by that goddeſs; Phrædra was wife to Theſeus, and fell in love with her ſon Hippolytus. Eriphyle was the daughter of Talaüs and Lyſimache, wife of the prophet Amphiaraus; who being bribed with a collar of gold by Polynices, obliged her huſband to go to the war of Thebes, though ſhe knew he was decreed to fall before that city: ſhe was ſlain by her ſon Alcmæon. Euſtathius.

Ulyſſes when he concludes, ſays it is time to repoſe,

Here in the court, or yonder on the waves.

To underſtand this the reader muſt rememember, that in the beginning of the eighth book all things were prepared for his immediate voyage, or as is there expreſſed,

——— Ev'n now the gales
Call thee aboard, and ſtretch the ſwelling ſails.

So that he deſires to repoſe in the ſhip, that he may begin his voyage early in the morning.

v. 414. *He ceas'd: but left ſo charming on their ear*
His voice———]

I cannot tell whether this pauſe, or break in the narration of Ulyſſes, has a good effect or not; whether it gives a relief to the reader, or is an unexpected diſappointment of the purſuit of the ſtory? But certainly what is inſerted during this ſhort interruption, is particularly well choſen; it unites the epiſode with the main action, and ſhews

'Till riſing up, Aretè ſilence broke,
Stretch'd out her ſnowy hand, and thus ſhe ſpoke:
What wond'rous man heav'n ſends us in our gueſt!
Thro' all his woes the hero ſhines confeſt;
His comely port, his ample frame expreſs
A manly air, majeſtic in diſtreſs.
He, as my gueſt, is my peculiar care,
You ſhare the pleaſure,—then in bounty ſhare;
To worth in miſery a rev'rence pay,
And with a gen'rous hand reward his ſtay;
For ſince kind heav'n with wealth our realm has bleſt,
Give it to heav'n, by aiding the diſtreſt.
Then ſage Echeneus, whoſe grave, rev'rend brow
The hand of time had ſilver'd o'er with ſnow,

how it contributes to the end of the Odyſſey, in influencing the Phæacians not only to reſtore Ulyſſes, but reſtore him with wealth and honour, which is the aim of the whole poem.

v. 416. ——*Aretè ſilence broke.*] Euſtathius obſerves, that the two motives which the queen uſes to move the Phæacians to liberality, is the relation Ulyſſes has to her, as her peculiar gueſt (for Nauſicaa firſt recommended him to the queen's protection) and their own wealth: (for ſo he renders ἔκας δ' ἔμμορε τιμῆς, and Dacier follows his interpretation) I have adventured to tranſlate it differently, in this ſenſe: "It is true, he is my peculiar gueſt, but you all ſhare "in the honour he does us, and therefore it is equitable to join in "his aſſiſtance:" then ſhe cloſes her ſpeech with reminding them of her abilities; which in the other ſenſe would be tautology.

v. 425. ——*with a gen'rous hand reward his ſtay.*] This I am perſuaded is the true meaning of the paſſage; Ulyſſes had ſhewed a deſire immediately to go aboard, and the queen draws an argument from this to induce the Phæacians to a greater contribution, and Ulyſſes to a longer ſtay; ſhe perſuades them to take time to prepare their preſents, which muſt occaſion the ſtay of Ulyſſes till they are prepared. They might otherwiſe (obſerves Dacier) have pretended to comply with the impatience of Ulyſſes, and immediately diſmiſſed him with a ſmall gratuity, under the pretext of not having time to prepare a greater. It muſt be confeſſed, to the reproach of human nature, that this is but too juſt a picture of it: ſelf-intereſt makes the great very ready to gratify their petitioners with a diſmiſſion, or to comply with them to their diſadvantage.

Mature in wiſdom roſe: Your words, he cries,
Demand obedience, for your words are wiſe.
But let our king direct the glorious way
To gen'rous acts; our part is to obey.
While life informs theſe limbs (the king reply'd)
Well to deſerve, be all my cares employ'd:
But here this night the royal gueſt detain,
'Till the ſun flames along th' ætherial plain:
Be it my taſk to ſend with ample ſtores
The ſtranger from our hoſpitable ſhores:
Tread you my ſteps! 'Tis mine to lead the race,
The firſt in glory, as the firſt in place.
To whom the prince: this night with joy I ſtay,
O monarch great in virtue as in ſway!
If thou the circling year my ſtay controul,
To raiſe a bounty noble as thy ſoul;
The circling year I wait, with ampler ſtores
And fitter pomp to hail my native ſhores:
Then by my realms due homage would be paid;
For wealthy kings are loyally obey'd!

v. 444. *If thou the circling year*, &c.] This ſpeech of Ulyſſes has been condemned by the critics, as avaritious; and therefore Euſtathius judges it to be ſpoken artfully and complimentally; Didymus, with a well-bred urbanity, or χαριέντως: I ſee nothing mean in it; what Ulyſſes ſpeaks proceeds from the gratitude of his ſoul; the heart of a brave man is apt to overflow while it acknowledges an obligation. Spondanus imagines that Ulyſſes may poſſibly ſpake jocoſely, and aſks if it is probable that he could be induced to ſtay from his country out of a mean conſideration of a few preſents, who had already preferred it to immortality? But in truth, Ulyſſes never behaves with levity; and it would give us an ill idea of that hero, ſhould he return the united kindneſs of the peers of Phæacia with ſcorn and deriſion: beſides, Ulyſſes values theſe preſents no otherwiſe than as they may contribute to his re-eſtabliſhment in his country; for he directly ſays,

So by my realms due homage ſhall be paid,
A wealthy prince is loyally obey'd.

This is an evidence, that the words of Ulyſſes flow not from ſo baſe a fountain as avarice, but that all his thoughts and actions center upon his country.

O king! for ſuch thou art, and ſure thy blood
Thro' veins (he cry'd) of royal fathers flow'd;
Unlike thoſe vagrants who on falſhood live,
Skill'd in ſmooth tales, and artful to deceive;
Thy better ſoul abhors the liar's part,
Wiſe is thy voice, and noble is thy heart.
Thy words like muſic ev'ry breaſt controul,
Steal thro' the ear, and win upon the ſoul;
Soft, as ſome ſong divine, thy ſtory flows,
Nor better could the muſe record thy woes.
But ſay, upon the dark and diſmal coaſt,
Saw'ſt thou the worthies of the Grecian hoſt?
The god-like leaders who in battle ſlain,
Fell before Troy, and nobly preſt the plain?
And lo! a length of night behind remains,
The ev'ning ſtars ſtill mount th' ætherial plains.

v. 454. *Thy better ſoul abhors the liar's part,*
Wiſe is thy voice.——]

This is an inſtance of the judgment of Homer in ſuſtaining his characters. The Phæacians were at firſt deſcribed as a credulous people, and he gives us here an inſtance of their credulity, for they ſwallow all theſe fables as ſo many realities. The verſe in the original is remarkable.

Σοὶ δ' ἐπὶ μὲν μορφὴ ἐπέων ἐπὶ δὲ φρενὸς ἐσθλαὶ.

Which Euſtathius thinks was uſed by Alcinous, to tell Ulyſſes that his fables were ſo well laid together as to have the appearance of truth; Dacier follows him, and (as uſual) delivers his opinion as her own ſentiment. But this cannot be Homer's intention, for it ſuppoſes Alcinous to look upon theſe relations as fables, contrary to the univerſal character of their ignorant credulity; I therefore am perſuaded that μορφὴ ἐπέων ſignifies the pleaſantneſs or beauty of his relation, and φρενὸς ἐσθλαὶ the integrity of his heart, in oppoſition to the character of a liar, or perhaps his wiſdom in general: and this excellently agrees with his reſembling him to a muſician, (who always was a poet in thoſe ages, and ſung the exploits of heroes, &c. to the the lyre.) In this view the ſweetneſs of the muſic repreſents the agreeableneſs of the narration, and the ſubject of the muſician's ſong the ſtory of his adventures.

Thy tale with raptures I could hear thee tell,
Thy woes on earth, the wond'rous ſcenes in hell,
'Till in the vault of heav'n the ſtars decay,
And the ſky reddens with the riſing day.
O worthy of the pow'r the gods aſſign'd,
(Ulyſſes thus replies) a king in mind!
Since yet the early hour of night allows
Time for diſcourſe, and time for ſoft repoſe,
If ſcenes of miſery can entertain,
Woes I unfold, of woes a diſmal train.
Prepare to hear of murder and of blood;
Of god-like heroes who uninjur'd ſtood
Amidſt a war of ſpears in foreign lands,
Yet bled at home, and bled by female hands.
Now ſummon'd Proſerpine to hell's black hall
The heroine ſhades; they vaniſh'd at her call;
When lo! advanc'd the forms of heroes ſlain
By ſtern Ægyſthus, a majeſtic train,
And high above the reſt, Atrides preſt the plain.
He quaff'd the gore: and ſtraight his ſoldier knew,
And from his eyes pour'd down the tender dew;
His arms he ſtretch'd; his arms the touch deceive,
Nor in the fond embrace, embraces give:
His ſubſtance vaniſh'd, and his ſtrength decay'd,
Now all Atrides is an empty ſhade.
Mov'd at the ſight, I for a ſpace reſign'd
To ſoft affliction all my manly mind;
At laſt with tears—O what relentleſs doom,
Imperial phantom, bow'd thee to the tomb?
Say while the ſea, and while the tempeſt raves,
Has fate oppreſs'd thee in the roaring waves,
Or nobly ſeiz'd thee in the dire alarms
Of war and ſlaughter, and the claſh of arms?
The ghoſt returns: O chief of human kind
For active courage and a patient mind;

Nor while the ſea, nor while the tempeſt raves,
Has fate oppreſs'd me on the roaring waves!
Nor nobly ſeiz'd me in the dire alarms,
Of war and ſlaughter, and the claſh of arms.
Stab'd by a murd'rous hand Atrides dy'd,
A foul adult'rer, and a faithleſs bride;
Ev'n in my mirth and at the friendly feaſt,
O'er the full bowl, the traitor ſtab'd his gueſt;
Thus by the gory arm of ſlaughter falls
The ſtately ox, and bleeds within the ſtalls.
But not with me the direful murder ends,
Theſe, theſe expir'd! their crime, they were my friends:
Thick as the boars, which ſome luxurious lord
Kills for the feaſt, to crown the nuptial board.
When war has thunder'd with its loudeſt ſtorms,
Death thou haſt ſeen in all her ghaſtly forms;
In duel met her, on the liſted ground,
When hand to hand they wound return for wound;
But never have thy eyes aſtoniſh'd view'd
So vile a deed, ſo dire a ſcene of blood.
Ev'n in the flow of joy, when now the bowl
Glows in our veins, and opens ev'ry ſoul,
We groan, we faint; with blood the dome is dy'd,
And o'er the pavement floats the dreadful tide——
Her breaſt all gore, with lamentable cries,
The bleeding innocent Caſſandra dies!
Then tho' pale death froze cold in ev'ry vein,
My ſword I ſtrive to wield, but ſtrive in vain;
Nor did my trait'reſs wife theſe eye-lids cloſe,
Or decently in death my limbs compoſe.
O woman, woman, when to ill thy mind
Is bent, all hell contains no fouler fiend:
And ſuch was mine! who baſely plung'd her ſword
Thro' the fond boſom where ſhe reign'd ador'd!
Alas! I hop'd, the toils of war o'ercome,
To meet ſoft quiet and repoſe at home;

Deluſive hope! O wife, thy deeds diſgrace
The perjur'd ſex, and blacken all the race;
And ſhould poſterity one virtuous find,
Name Clytemneſtra, they will curſe the kind.

v. 539. *And ſhould poſterity one virtuous find,*
Name Clytemneſtra, they will curſe the kind.]

There cannot be a greater ſatyr upon the fair ſex than this whole conference between Ulyſſes and Agamemnon. Terence has fallen into the ſentiment with Homer.

" Ædepol, næ nos æquè ſumus omnes inviſæ viris
" Propter paucas, quæ omnes faciunt dignæ ut videamur
" malo."

But how is this to be reconciled to juſtice, and why ſhould the innocent ſuffer for the crimes of the guilty? We are to take notice, that Agamemnon ſpeaks with anger, an undiſtinguiſhing paſſion, and his words flow from reſentment, not reaſon; it muſt be confeſſed that Agamemnon had received great provocation, his wife had diſhonoured his bed, and taken his life away; it is therefore no wonder if he flies out into a vehemence of language; a poet is obliged to follow nature, and give a fierceneſs to the features, when he paints a perſon in ſuch emotions, and add a violence to his colours.

It has been objected that Homer, and even Virgil, were enemies to the faireſt part of the creation; that there is ſcarce a good character of a woman in either of the poets: but Andromache in the Iliad, and Penelope, Arete, and Nauſicaa in the Odyſſey, are inſtances to the contrary. I muſt own I am a little at a loſs to vindicate Ulyſſes in this place; he is ſpeaking before Arete and Nauſicaa, a queen and her daughter, and entertains them with a ſatyr upon their own ſex, which may appear unpolite, and a want of decency, and be applied by Alcinous as a caution to beware of his ſpouſe, and not to truſt her in matters of importance with his ſecrets; for this is the moral that is naturally drawn from the fable. Madam Dacier gives up the cauſe, and allows the advice of not truſting women to be good; it comes from her indeed a little unwillingly, with " I will " not ſay but the counſel may be right." I for my part will allow Ulyſſes to be in an hundred faults, rather than lay ſuch an imputation upon the ladies; Ulyſſes ought to be conſidered as having ſuffered twenty years calamities for that ſex in the cauſe of Helen, and this poſſibly may give a little acrimony to his language. He puts it indeed in the mouth of Agamemnon; but the objection returns, why does he chuſe to relate ſuch a ſtory before a queen and her daughter? In ſhort, I think they ought to have torn him to pieces, as the ladies of Thrace ſerved Orpheus.

O injur'd ſhade, I cry'd, what mighty woes
To thy imperial race from woman roſe!
By woman here thou tread'ſt this mournful ſtrand,
And Greece by woman lies a deſert land.
Warn'd by my ills beware, the ſhade replies,
Nor truſt the ſex that is ſo rarely wiſe;
When earneſt to explore thy ſecret breaſt,
Unfold ſome trifle, but conceal the reſt.
But in thy conſort ceaſe to fear a foe,
For thee ſhe feels ſincerity of woe:
When Troy firſt bled beneath the Grecian arms
She ſhone unrival'd with a blaze of charms,
Thy infant ſon her fragrant boſom preſt,
Hung at her knee, or wanton'd at her breaſt;
But now the years a num'rous train have ran;
The blooming boy is ripen'd into man;
Thy eyes ſhall ſee him burn with noble fire,
The ſire ſhall bleſs his ſon, the ſon his ſire:
But my Oreſtes never met theſe eyes,
Without one look the murder'd father dies;
Then from a wretched friend this wiſdom learn,
Ev'n to thy queen diſguis'd, unknown, return;
For ſince of womankind ſo few are juſt,
Think all are falſe, nor ev'n the faithful truſt.
But ſay, reſides my ſon in royal port,
In rich Orchomenos, or Sparta's court?

v. 541. ——————*what mighty woes*
To thy imperial race from woman roſe!]

Ulyſſes here means Aërope the wife of Atreus, and mother of Agamemnon, who being corrupted by Thyeſtes, involved the whole family in the utmoſt calamities. Euſtathius.

v. 565. *But ſay, reſides my ſon* ——————] Euſtathius gives us the reaſon why Agamemnon mentions Pyle, Sparta, and Orchomenos, as places where Oreſtes might make his reſidence: Sparta was under the dominion of his brother Menelaus; Pyle of his old friend and faithful counſellor Neſtor; and Orchomenos was a city of great ſtrength, and therefore of great ſecurity. We may evidently gather

Or ſay in Pyle? for yet he views the light,
Nor glides a phantom thro' the realms of night.
Then I: Thy ſuit is vain, nor can I ſay
If yet he breathes in realms of chearful day;
Or pale or wan beholds theſe nether ſkies?
Truth I revere: for wiſdom never lies.
Thus in a tide of tears our ſorrows flow,
And add new horrour to the realms of woe;
Till ſide by ſide along the dreary coaſt
Advanc'd Achilles' and Patroclus' ghoſt,
A friendly pair! near theſe the * Pylian ſtray'd,
And tow'ring Ajax, an illuſtrious ſhade!
War was his joy, and pleas'd with loud alarms,
None but Pelides brighter ſhone in arms.
Thro' the thick gloom his friend Achilles knew,
And as he ſpeaks the tears deſcend in dew.
Com'ſt thou alive to view the Stygian bounds,
Where the wan ſpectres walk eternal rounds;
Nor fear'ſt the dark and diſmal waſte to tread,
Throng'd with pale ghoſts, familiar with the dead?

from this paſſage, what notion the ancients had concerning a future ſtate: namely, that perſons after death were intirely ſtrangers to the affairs of this world; for Oreſtes his ſon had ſlain his murderer Ægyſthus, and reigned in peaceable poſſeſſion of his dominions, when Agamemnon is ignorant of the whole tranſaction, and deſires Ulyſſes to give him information.

v. 576. —— *Achilles' and Patroclus' ghoſt.*] Homer lets no opportunity paſs of celebrating his hero Achilles, he cannot fail of awakening our attention to hear the ſtory of this great man after death, of whom alive we ſaw ſuch wonders. Beſides, the poet pays an honour to true friendſhip: the perſon whom Achilles beſt loved on earth, is his chief companion in the other world: a very ſtrong argument to cultivate friendſhip with ſincerity. Achilles here literally fulfils what he promiſed in the Iliad.

If in the melancholy ſhades below
The flames of friends, and lovers ceaſe to glow,
Yet mine ſhall ſacred laſt; mine undecay'd
Burn on thro' death, and animate my ſhade.

* Antilochus.

To whom with ſighs: I paſs theſe dreadful gates
To ſeek the Theban, and conſult the fates:
For ſtill diſtreſt I rove from coaſt to coaſt,
Loſt to my friends, and to my country loſt.
But ſure the eye of time beholds no name
So bleſt as thine in all the rolls of fame;
Alive we hail'd thee with our guardian gods,
And dead, thou rul'ſt a king in theſe abodes.
Talk not of ruling in this dol'rous gloom,
Nor think vain words (he cry'd) can eaſe my doom.
Rather I chuſe laborioufly to bear
A weight of woes, and breathe the vital air,
A ſlave to ſome poor hind that toils for bread;
Than reign the ſcepter'd monarch of the dead.

v. 599. *A ſlave to ſome poor hind that toils for bread;*
Than reign the ſcepter'd monarch of the dead.]

Nothing ſure can give us a more diſadvantageous image of a future ſtate, than this ſpeech which Homer puts into the mouth of ſo great a hero as Achilles. If the poet intended to ſhew the vanity of that deſtructive glory which is purchaſed by the ſword, and read a lecture, to all the diſturbers of mankind, whom we abſurdly honour as heroes, it muſt be allowed he has done it effectually: if this was not his deſign, the remark of Plato, 3 Repub. is not without a foundation; he there proſcribes this whole paſſage as dangerous to morals, and blames the poet for making Achilles ſay he prefers miſery and ſervitude to all the honours which the dead are capable of enjoying. For what, ſays he, can make death more terrible to young perſons? And will it not diſpoſe them to ſuffer all calamities to avoid it, deter them from expoſing themſelves to danger, even in defence of their country, and teach them to be cowards and ſlaves? Lucian was of Plato's opinion, for he mentions this paſſage, and ridicules it in his dialogues. Dacier gives a different turn to it, and endeavours to ſhew that there is no danger of ſuch conſequences as Plato draws from it. "Achilles, adds ſhe, ſpeaks directly contrary to his declared ſentiments and actions, and therefore there is no danger he ſhould perſuade mankind to prefer ſervitude before death, when he himſelf died, rather than not revenge his friend Patroclus. Such words which are contradicted both by the ſentiments and actions of him that ſpeaks, have on the contrary a very good effect." But I cannot come into her opinion; I will let Achilles anſwer for himſelf out of Lucian; "In the other world I was ignorant, ſays he, of the ſtate of the dead, I had not experienced the difference

But ſay, if in my ſteps my ſon proceeds,
And emulates his god-like father's deeds?
If at the claſh of arms, and ſhout of foes,
Swells his bold heart, his boſom nobly glows?
Say if my ſire, the rev'rend Peleus reigns
Great in his Phthia, and his throne maintains;
Or weak and old, my youthful arm demands,
To fix the ſcepter ſteadfaſt in his hands?
O might the lamp of life rekindled burn,
And death releaſe me from the ſilent urn!
This arm that thunder'd o'er the Phrygian plain,
And ſwell'd the ground with mountains of the ſlain,
Should vindicate my injur'd father's fame,
Cruſh the proud rebel, and aſſert his claim.
Illuſtrious ſhade, (I cry'd) of Peleus' fates
No circumſtance the voice of fame relates:
But hear with pleas'd attention the renown,
The wars and wiſdom of thy gallant ſon:
With me from Scyros to the field of fame
Radiant in arms the blooming hero came.
When Greece aſſembled all her hundred ſtates
To ripen counſels, and decide debates;
Heav'ns! how he charm'd us with a flow of ſenſe,
And won the heart with manly eloquence!
He firſt was ſeen of all the peers to riſe,
The third in wiſdom where they all were wiſe;

" between the two ſtates, when I preferred a little empty glory to " life." This is an aniwer to what Dacier advances, for Achilles ſpeaks with experience, and yet prefers miſery and life before glory and death. I know not how to vindicate Homer, unleſs it be a vindication to ſay, that he wrote according to the opinions that antiently prevailed in the world; or that, like Hercules, while the vehicle of Achilles is in this ſtate of horrour, his ſoul may be in heaven; eſpecially ſince he received divine honours after his death, as well as Hercules. Tull. Nat. Deor. 3. " Aſtypalæa Achillem ſanctiſſimè " colit, qui ſi deus eſt, & Orpheus, &c "

v. 626. *The third in wiſdom* ——] I have not ventured to render the Greek literally; Ulyſſes ſays that Neoptolemus was ſo

But when to try the fortune of the day,
Hoſt mov'd tow'rd hoſt in terrible array,
Before the van, impatient for the fight,
With martial port he ſtrode, and ſtern delight;
Heaps ſtrew'd on heaps beneath his falchion groan'd,
And monuments of dead deform'd the ground.
The time would fail ſhould I in order tell
What foes were vanquiſh'd, and what numbers fell:
How, loſt thro' love, Eurypylus was ſlain,
And round him bled his bold Cetæan train.

wiſe, that only he himſelf and Neſtor were wiſer; a truth that would appear more graceful, if ſpoken by any other perſon than Ulyſſes. But perhaps the poet puts theſe words into his mouth, only becauſe he is ſpeaking to the Phæacians, who loved themſelves to boaſt, and were full of vain-glory; and conſequently they could not think ſelf praiſe a crime in Ulyſſes; on the contrary, it could not fail of having a very good effect, as it ſets him off as a perſon of conſummate wiſdom.

The poet excellently ſuſtains the character of Achilles in this interview: in the Iliad he is deſcribed a dutiful ſon, and always expreſſing a tender affection for his father Peleus; in the Odyſſey he is drawn in the ſame ſoft colours: in the Iliad he is repreſented as a man of ſtrong reſentment; in the Odyſſey, he firſt imagines that his father ſuffers, and upon this imagination he immediately takes fire, and flies into threats and fury.

Dictys, lib. vi. relates, that Peleus was expelled from his kingdom by Acaſtus, but that Pyrrhus the ſon of Achilles afterwards revenged the injury.

v. 635. *How, loſt thro' love, Eurypylus was ſlain.*] It muſt be owned that this paſſage is very intricate: Strabo himſelf complains of its obſcurity: the poet (ſays that author) rather propoſes an ænigma, than a clear hiſtory: for who are theſe Cetæans, and what are theſe "preſents of women?" And adds, that the grammarians darken, inſtead of clearing the obſcurity. But it is no difficulty to ſolve theſe objections from Euſtathius.

It is evident from Strabo himſelf, that Eurypylus reigned near the river Caïcus, over the Myſians, and Pliny confines it to Teuthrany; this agrees with what Ovid writes, Metam. ii.

"——Teuthrantæuſque Caïcus."

And Virgil ſhews us that Caïcus was a river of Myſia, Georg. iv.

"Saxoſumque ſonans Hypanis, Myſuſque Caïcus."

But what relation has Caïcus to the Cetæans? Heſychius informs us, that they are a people of Myſia, ſo called from the river Cetium,

To Troy no hero came of nobler line,
Or if of nobler, Memnon, it was thine.

which runs through their country; Κήτειοι, γένος Μυσῶν, ἀπὸ τοῦ παῤῥέοντος πολαμοῦ Κήτεος. This river diſcharges itſelf into the Caïcus, and conſequently the Cetæans were Myſians, over whom Eurypylus reigned. It would be endleſs to tranſcribe the different opinions of writers cited by Euſtathius; ſome read the verſe thus:

Κήτειοι κλεινοῖο γυναικῶν, εἵνικα δώρων.

Then the meaning will be, "How they fell far from their wives, for "the ſake of a reward;" that is, for their pay from Hector, who, as it appears from the Iliad, taxed the Trojans to pay the auxiliaries, one of whom was Eurypylus. Others think the word ſignifies, "great "of ſtature," and in this ſenſe we find it uſed in the firſt line of the fourth Odyſſey.

——Λακεδαίμονα Κητώεσσαν.

But I have followed the firſt opinion, as appearing moſt probable and natural.

But how are we to explain the ſecond objection, or γυναικῶν εἵνεκα δώρων? Some (ſays Euſtathius) underſtand the expreſſion as applied to Neoptolemus, and not Eurypylus; namely, Eurypylus and his ſoldiers fell by means of the "gifts of women;" that is, Neoptolemus was led to the war by the promiſe of having Hermione in marriage, the daughter of Menelaus, which promiſe occaſioned the death of Eurypylus, by bringing Neoptolemus to the ſiege of Troy. Others underſtand it to be ſpoken of a golden vine, ſent by Priam to his ſiſter Aſtyoche the mother of Eurypylus, to induce her to perſuade her ſon to undertake this expedition to Troy, where he was ſlain by the ſon of Achilles; this vine was ſaid to be given to Tros the father of Priam by Jupiter, as a recompence for his carrying away his ſon Ganymede to be his cup-bearer; but this is too much a fable to be followed. Others more probably aſſert, that Priam had promiſed one of his daughters to Eurypylus, to engage his aſſiſtance in the war; and this agrees very well with Homer's manner of writing in many places of the Iliad; and there is a great reſemblance between Eurypylus in the Odyſſey and Othryoneus in the Iliad, lib. xiii. 461.

Caſſandra's love he ſought, with boaſts of pow'r,
And promis'd conqueſt was the proffer'd dow'r.

Spondanus cites a paſſage from Dictys, lib, iv. that very well explains theſe difficulties: "Inter quæ tam læta (nimirum mor-"tem Achillis, &c.) Priamo ſupervenit nuncius Eurypylum Te-"lephi filium ex Myſia adventare, quem rex multis anteà illec-"tum præmiis, ad poſtremum oblatione Caſſandræ confirmave-

When Ilion in the horſe receiv'd her doom,
And unſeen armies ambuſh'd in its womb;
Greece gave her latent warriours to my care,
'Twas mine on Troy to pour th' impriſon'd war:
Then when the boldeſt boſom beat with fear,
When the ſtern eyes of heroes dropp'd a tear;
Fierce in his look his ardent valour glow'd,
Fluſh'd in his cheek, or ſally'd in his blood;
Indignant in the dark receſs he ſtands,
Pants for the battle, and the war demands;
His voice breath'd death, and with a martial air
He graſp'd his ſword, and ſhook his glitt'ring ſpear.
And when the gods our arms with conqueſt crown'd,
When Troy's proud bulwarks ſmok'd upon the ground,
Greece to reward her ſoldiers gallant toils,
Heap'd high his navy with unnumber'd ſpoils.
Thus great in glory from the din of war
Safe he return'd, without one hoſtile ſcar;
Tho' ſpears in iron tempeſts rain'd around,
Yet innocent they play'd, and guiltleſs of a wound.
While yet I ſpoke, the ſhade with tranſport glow'd,
Roſe in his majeſty, and nobler trod;
With haughty ſtalk he ſought the diſtant glades
Of warriour kings, and join'd th' illuſtrious ſhades.
Now without number ghoſt by ghoſt aroſe,
All wailing with unutterable woes.
Alone, apart, in diſcontented mood
A gloomy ſhade, the ſullen Ajax ſtood;
For ever ſad with proud diſdain he pin'd,
And the loſt arms for ever ſtung his mind;
Tho' to the conteſt Thetis gave the laws,
And Pallas, by the Trojans, judg'd the cauſe.

" rat, addiderat etiam auream vitem, & ob id per populos me-
" morabilem."

v. 669. *Tho' to the conteſt Thetis gave the laws,*
And Pallas, by the Trojans, judg'd the cauſe]

O why was I victorious in the ſtrife ;
O dear-bought honour with ſo brave a life !
With him the ſtrength of war, the ſoldiers pride,
Our ſecond hope to great Achilles dy'd !
Touch'd at the ſight from tears I ſcarce refrain,
And tender ſorrow thrills in ev'ry vein ;
Penſive and ſad I ſtand, at length accoſt,
With accents mild th' inexorable ghoſt.
Still burns thy rage ? and can brave ſouls reſent
Ev'n after death ? Relent, great ſhade, relent !
Periſh thoſe arms which by the gods decree
Accurs'd our army with the loſs of thee !
With thee we fell ; Greece wept thy hapleſs fates ;
And ſhook aſtoniſh'd thro' her hundred ſtates ;

There are two particulars which want explication in theſe verſes : how did Thetis give the law to the conteſt between Ajax and Ulyſſes ? and how could the Trojans be made judges to determine between two Grecian heroes ? Thetis the mother of Achilles was a goddeſs, and out of honour to her, the chiefs of the Grecian army propoſed the arms of her ſon as a reward to the moſt worthy ; and poetry, to give a magnificence to the ſtory, introduces the goddeſs as acting in perſon what is done upon her account. Thetis may properly be ſaid to be deſirous that the memory of her ſon ſhould be honoured ; and Homer to expreſs this deſire poetically, tells us it was the act of that goddeſs, to propoſe the arms of Achilles as a reward to the moſt worthy of the Grecian heroes.

The ſecond difficulty is fully explained by Euſtathius : Agamemnon finding it an invidious affair to give the preference to any one of the Grecian heroes, and being willing to avoid the reproach of partiality, commanded the Trojan priſoners to be brought before the whole army, and aſked from which of the two heroes, Ajax or Ulyſſes, they had received the greater detriment ; they immediately replied from Ulyſſes ; thus the Trojans adjudged the cauſe. The poet adds, that this was done by Minerva ; that is, the affair was conducted with wiſdom, the reſult of which in poetry is uſually aſcribed to the goddeſs of it ; and no doubt but the goddeſs of wiſdom muſt always prefer wiſdom to mere valour, or a Ulyſſes to an Ajax. This deciſion is related in a very different manner by other poets ; in particular by Ovid, in his Metamorphoſis ; but Lucian in his dialogues agrees with Homer in every point very circumſtantially, and conſequently with ſome obſcurity ; but what I have here ſaid fully explains that dialogue of Lucian, as well as this paſſage of Homer.

Not more, when great Achilles preſt the ground,
And breath'd his manly ſpirit thro' the wound.
O deem thy fall not ow'd to man's decree,
Jove hated Greece, and puniſh'd Greece in thee!
Turn then, oh peaceful turn, thy wrath controul,
And calm the raging tempeſt of thy ſoul.

While yet I ſpeak, the ſhade diſdains to ſtay,
In ſilence turns, and ſullen ſtalks away.
Touch'd at his ſour retreat, thro' deepeſt night,
Thro' hell's black bounds I had purſu'd his flight,
And forc'd the ſtubborn ſpectre to reply;
But wond'rous viſions drew my curious eye.
High on a throne tremendous to behold,
Stern Minos waves a mace of burniſh'd gold;
Around ten thouſand thouſand ſpectres ſtand
Thro' the wide dome of Dis, a trembling band.

v. 691. ——*The ſhade diſdains to ſtay,*
In ſilence turns, and ſullen ſtalks away.]

This ſilence of Ajax was very much admired by the ancients, and Longinus propoſes it as an inſtance of the true ſublimity of thought, which ſprings from an elevation of ſoul, and not from the diction; for a man may be truly ſublime without ſpeaking a word: thus in the ſilence of Ajax there is ſomething more noble, than in any thing he could poſſibly have ſpoken. Monſieur Rapin agrees with Longinus: the ſtubborn untractable Ajax (ſays that author) could not have made a better return to the compliments full of ſubmiſſion which were paid him by Ulyſſes, than by a diſdainful and contemptuous ſilence: Ajax has more the air of grandeur and majeſty, when he ſays nothing, than when the poet makes him ſpeak. Virgil was ſenſible of the beauty of it, and paints Dido in the Attitude of Ajax. Fraguier infinitely prefers the ſilence of Dido to that of Ajax; ſhe was a woman diſappointed in love, and therefore no wonder if ſhe was greatly paſſionate, and ſunk under the weight of the calamity; but Ajax was a hero, and ought to have freed himſelf by his courage from ſuch an unworthy degree of reſentment. But to me there appears no weight in this objection: we muſt remember what an hero Ajax is, a ſour, ſtubborn, untractable hero; and upon all occaſions given to taciturnity; this is his univerſal and notorious character through the whole Iliad: the poet therefore adapts his deſcription to it, and he is the ſame Ajax in the Odyſſey as he was in the Iliad. Had this been ſpoken of any other hero, the criticiſm had been more juſt, but in Ajax this ſtubborn ſilence is proper and noble.

Still as they plead, the fatal lots he rolls,
Abſolves the juſt, and dooms the guilty ſouls.
There huge Orion of portentous ſize,
Swift thro' the gloom a giant-hunter flies;

v. 701. *Still as they plead,*——] The expreſſion in the Greek is remarkable, Ἥμενοι, ἑϛαότες τε; that is, "ſtanding and ſitting;" this is to be referred to different perſons; the ἑϛαότες were the συνδικαϛαὶ, or perſons who pleaded the cauſe of the guilty or innocent before the infernal judges: the ἥμενοι were the perſons for whom they pleaded, or thoſe who were about to receive judgment. I doubt not but this was a cuſtom obſerved in the courts of judicature in the days of Homer. Euſtathius.

v. 703. ——*Orion of portentous ſize,*
Swift thro' the gloom a giant-hunter flies.]

The diverſion of this infernal hunter may ſeem extraordinary in purſuing the ſhades of beaſts; but it was the opinion of the ancients, that the ſame paſſions to which men were ſubject on earth continued with them in the other world; and their ſhades were liable to be affected in the ſame manner as their bodies: thus we frequently ſee them ſhedding tears, and Siſyphus ſweats, in rolling the ſtone up the mountain. Virgil,

"Stant terra defixæ haſtæ, paſſimque ſoluti
"Per campos paſcuntur equi, quæ cura nitentes
"Paſcere equos, eadem ſequitur tellure repoſtos."

And again,

——"Curæ non ipsâ in morte relinquunt."

I cannot but be of opinion that Milton has far ſurpaſſed both the Greek and the Roman poet, in the deſcription of the employment of the fallen angels in hell, as the ideas are more noble and ſuitable to the characters he deſcribes.

Part on the plain, or in the air ſublime
Upon the wing, or in ſwift race contend,
As at th' Olympian games or Pythian fields:
Part curb the fiery ſteeds, or ſhun the goal
With rapid wheels, or fronted brigades form.
Others with vaſt Typhæan rage more fell
Rend up both rocks, and hills, and ride the air
In whirlwind: Hell ſcarce holds the wild uproar.

—— Others more mild
Retreated in a ſilent valley, ſing
With notes angelical to many an harp,
Their own heroic deeds——
The ſong was partial, but the harmony
Suſpended hell, and took with raviſhment
The thronging audience, &c.

A pond'rous mace of braſs with direful ſway
Aloft he whirls, to cruſh the ſavage prey;
Stern beaſts in trains that by his truncheon fell,
Now griſly forms, ſhoot o'er the lawns of hell.
There Tityus large and long, in fetters bound,
O'erſpreads nine acres of infernal ground;

v. 709. *There Tityus* ———] It is needleſs to mention that Virgil has adorned his deſcent into hell with moſt of theſe fables borrowed from Homer; it is equally unneceſſary to relate what antiquity ſays of theſe fabled perſons, and their hiſtories; but the moral of them all is obſerved by Euſtathius, and fully explained by Lucretius, which I will lay together from Mr. Dryden's tranſlation.

———The diſmal tales that poets tell
Are verify'd on earth and not in hell;
No Tantalus looks with a fearful eye,
Or dreads th' impending rock to cruſh him from on high;
No Tityus, torn by vultures, lies in hell,
Nor could the lobes of his rank liver ſwell
To that prodigious maſs, for their eternal meal.
But he's the Tityus, who, by love oppreſs'd,
Or tyrant-paſſion preying on his breaſt,
And ever anxious thoughts, is robb'd of reſt.
The Siſyphus is he, whom noiſe and ſtrife
Seduce from all the ſoft retreats of life,
To vex the government, diſturb the laws:
Drunk with the fumes of popular applauſe,
He courts the giddy crowd to make him great,
And ſweats and toils in vain, to mount the ſov'reign ſeat.
For ſtill to aim at pow'r, and ſtill to fail,
Ever to ſtrive, and never to prevail,
What is it but in reaſon's true account,
To heave the ſtone againſt the riſing mount?

I will only add the reaſon from Euſtathius, why Tityus was fabled to be the ſon of the earth; it was from his being immerſed in worldly cares, and from his centering all his affections upon the earth, as if he had ſprung from it; this is alluded to by the expreſſion κείμενον ἐν δαπέδῳ. Spondanus gives us another reaſon; Elara being pregnant by Jupiter, he to avoid the jealouſy of Juno concealed her in a cavern of the earth, where Tityus being born, is fabled to be the ſon of the earth, he adds, that the fiction of his covering nine acres, aroſe from that ſpace of ground which was encloſed for his place of burial. Perhaps the ſtory of Tantalus was invented ſolely to paint the nature of a covetous perſon, who ſtarves amidſt plenty, like Tantalus in the midſt of water. Thus Horace applies it, Satyr i. v. 70.

Two rav'nous vultures, furious for their food,
Scream o'er the fiend, and riot in his blood,
Inceſſant gore the liver in his breaſt,
Th' immortal liver grows, and gives th' immortal feaſt.
For as o'er Panopé's enamell'd plains
Latona journey'd to the Pythian fanes.
With haughty love th' audacious monſter ſtrove
To force the goddeſs, and to rival Jove.
There Tantalus along the Stygian bounds
Pours out deep groans; (with groans all hell reſounds)
Ev'n in the circling floods refreſhment craves,
And pines with thirſt amidſt a ſea of waves:
When to the water he his lip applies,
Back from his lip the treach'rous water flies.
Above, beneath, around his hapleſs head,
Trees of all kinds delicious fruitage ſpread;
There figs ſky-dy'd, a purple hue diſcloſe,
Green looks the olive, the pomegranate glows,
There dangling pears exalted ſcents unfold,
And yellow apples ripen into gold;
The fruit he ſtrives to ſeize: but blaſts ariſe,
Toſs it on high, and whirl it to the ſkies.
I turn'd my eye, and as I turn'd ſurvey'd
A mournful viſion! the Siſyphian ſhade;
With many a weary ſtep, and many a groan,
Up the high hill he heaves a huge round ſtone;

"Tantalus a labris ſitiens fugientia captat
"Flumina. Quid rides? mutato nomine de te
"Fabula narratur, congeſtis undique faccis
"Indormis inhians, & tanquam parcere ſacris
"Cogeris."——

v. 736. *Up the high hill he heaves a huge round ſtone.*] This is a very remarkable inſtance of the beauty of Homer's verſification; it is taken notice of by Euſtathius, but copiouſly explained by Dionyſius Halicarnaſſus, in his treatiſe of placing of words.

Λᾶαν βαςάζοντα ϖελώριον ἀμφοτέρηϕιν,
Ἦτοι ὁ μὲν σκηριπτόμενος χερσίν τε ϖοσίν τε,
Λᾶαν ἄνω ὤθεσκε——

The huge round ſtone, reſulting with a bound,
Thunders impetuous down, and ſmokes along the ground.
Again the reſtleſs orb his toil renews,
Duſt mounts in clouds, and ſweat deſcends in dews.
Now I the ſtrength of Hercules behold,
A tow'ring ſpectre of gigantic mould,
A ſhadowy form! for high in heav'n's abodes
Himſelf reſides, a god among the gods;

Here (ſays Dionyſius) we ſee in the choice and diſpoſition of the words the fact which they deſcribe; the weight of the ſtone, and the ſtriving to heave it up the mountain: to effect this, Homer clogs the verſe with ſpondees or long ſyllables, and leaves the vowels open, as in λᾶαν, and in ἄνω ὦθεσκε, which two words it is impoſſible to pronounce without heſitation and difficulty; the very words and ſyllables are heavy, and as it were make reſiſtance in the pronunciation, to expreſs the heavineſs of the ſtone, and the difficulty with which it is forced up the mountain. To give the Engliſh reader a faint image of the beauty of the original in the tranſlation, I have loaded the verſe with monoſyllables, and theſe almoſt all begin with aſpirates.

Up the high hill he heaves a huge round ſtone.

Homer is no leſs happy in deſcribing the ruſhing down of the ſtone from the top of the mountain.

Αὖτις ἔπειτα πέδονδε κυλίνδετο λᾶας ἀναιδὴς.

Is it not evident, (continues Dionyſius) that the ſwiftneſs of the verſe imitates the celerity of the ſtone in its deſcent; nay, that the verſe runs with the greater rapidity? What is the cauſe of this? it is becauſe there is not one monoſyllable in the line, and but two diſſyllables, ten of the ſyllables are ſhort, and not one ſpondee in it, except one that could not be avoided at the concluſion of it; there is no hiatus or gap between word and word, no vowels left open to retard the celerity of it: the whole ſeems to be but one word, the ſyllables melt into one another, and flow away with the utmoſt rapidity in a torrent of Dactyls. I was too ſenſible of the beauty of this not to endeavour to imitate it, though unſucceſsfully: I have therefore thrown it into the ſwiftneſs of an Alexandrine, to make it of a more proportionable number of ſyllables with the Greek.

I refer the reader for a fuller explication of theſe verſes to Dionyſius.

v. 741. 743. ——*Hercules, a ſhadowy form.*] This is the paſſage formerly referred to in theſe annotations, to prove that Hercules

There in the bright aſſemblies of the ſkies,
He nectar quaffs, and Hebe crowns his joys.
Here hov'ring ghoſts, like fowl, his ſhade ſurround,
And clang their pinions with terrific ſound;
Gloomy as night he ſtands, in act to throw
Th' aerial arrow from the twanging bow.
Around his breaſt a wond'rous zone is roll'd,
Where woodland monſters grin in fretted gold,
There ſullen lions ſternly ſeem to roar,
The bear to growl, to foam the tuſky boar,
There war and havock and deſtruction ſtood,
And vengeful murder red with human blood.
Thus terribly adorn'd the figures ſhine,
Inimitably wrought with ſkill divine.

was in heaven, while his ſhade was in the infernal regions; a full evidence of the partition of the human compoſition into three parts: the body is buried in the earth; the image or εἴδωλον deſcends into the regions of the departed; and the ſoul, or the divine part of man, is received into heaven: thus the body of Hercules was conſumed in the flames, his image is in hell, and his ſoul in heaven. There is a beautiful moral couched in the fable of his being married to Hebe, or youth, after death: to imply, that a perpetual youth or a reputation which never grows old, is the reward of thoſe heroes, who like Hercules employ their courage for the good of human-kind.

v. 758. *Inimitably wrought with ſkill divine.*] This verſe is not without obſcurity; Euſtathius gives us ſeveral interpretations of it.

Μὴ, τεχνησάμενον, μὴ δ' Ἄλλό τι τεχνήσαιτο.

The negative μὴ, by being repeated, ſeems to be redundant; and this in a great meaſure occaſions the difficulty; but in the Greek language two negatives more ſtrongly deny; this being premiſed, we may read the verſe as if the former μὴ were abſent, and then the meaning will be, "He that made this zone, never made any thing "equal to it;" as if we ſhould ſay, that Phidias who made the ſtatue of Jupiter never made any other ſtatue like it; that is, he employed the whole power of his ſkill upon it. Others underſtand the verſe as an execration: "Oh never, never may the hand that made it, make any thing again ſo terrible as this zone:" and this will give ſome reaſon for the repetition of the negative particles. Dacier approves of this latter explication, and moralizes upon it: It proceeds (ſays ſhe) from a tender ſentiment of humanity in Ulyſſes, who wiſhes that there may never more be occaſion for ſuch a deſign, as the

The mighty ghoſt advanc'd with awful look,
And turning his grim viſage, ſternly ſpoke.
O exercis'd in grief! by arts refin'd!
O taught to bear the wrongs of baſe mankind!
Such, ſuch was I! ſtill toſt from care to care,
While in your world I drew the vital air!
Ev'n I who from the lord of thunders roſe,
Bore toils and dangers, and a weight of woes;
To a baſe monarch ſtill a ſlave confin'd,
(The hardeſt bondage to a gen'rous mind!)
Down to theſe worlds I trod the diſmal way,
And dragg'd the three-mouth'd dog to upper day;
Ev'n hell I conquered, thro' the friendly aid
Of Maia's offspring and the martial maid.
Thus he, nor deign'd for our reply to ſtay,
But turning ſtalk'd with giant-ſtrides away.
Curious to view the kings of antient days,
The mighty dead that live in endleſs praiſe,

artiſt executed in this belt of Hercules: that there may be no more giants to conquer, no more monſters to tame, nor no more human blood to be ſhed. I wiſh that ſuch a pious and well natured explication were to be drawn from the paſſage! But how is it poſſible that the artiſt who made this zone ſhould ever make another, when he had been in his grave ſome centuries? (for ſuch a diſtance there was between the days of Hercules and Ulyſſes;) and conſequently it would be impertinent to wiſh it. I have therefore followed the former interpretation. I will only add, that this belt of Hercules is the reverſe of the girdle of Venus; in that there is a collection of every thing that is amiable, in this, a variety of horrours; but both are maſter-pieces in their kind.

v. 769. *Down to theſe worlds I trod the diſmal way.*] Nothing can be more artfully inſerted than the mention of this deſcent of Hercules into the regions of the dead: Ulyſſes ſhews by it at leaſt that it was a vulgar opinion, and conſequently within the degrees of poetical probability; a poet being at liberty to follow common fame: in particular, it could not fail of having a full effect upon his Phæacian auditors, not only as it in ſome meaſure ſets him upon a level with Hercules, but as it is an example of a like undertaking with this which he has been relating, and therefore a probable method to gain their belief of it. Euſtathius.

Reſolv'd I ſtand; and haply had ſurvey'd
The god-like Theſeus, and Perithous' ſhade;
But ſwarms of ſpectres roſe from deepeſt hell,
With bloodleſs viſage, and with hideous yell,
They ſcream, they ſhriek; ſad groans and diſmal ſounds
Stun my ſcar'd ears, and pierce hell's utmoſt bounds.
No more my heart the diſmal din ſuſtains,
And my cold blood hangs ſhiv'ring in my veins;
Leſt Gorgon riſing from th' infernal lakes,
With horrours arm'd, and curls of hiſſing ſnakes,
Should fix me, ſtiffen'd at the monſtrous ſight,
A ſtony image, in eternal night!

v. 777. —— *And haply had ſurvey'd*
The god-like Theſeus, ——]

Plutarch in his life of Theſeus informs us, that this verſe has been thought not genuine; but added to the Odyſſey in honour of the Athenians by Piſiſtratus.

The poet ſhews us that he had ſtill a noble fund of invention, and had it in his power to open new ſcenes of wonder and entertainment; but that this infernal epiſode might not be too long, he ſhifts the ſcene: the invention of the Gorgon, which terrifies him from a longer abode in theſe realms of darkneſs gives a probable reaſon for his immediate return. Euſtathius informs us from Athenæus, that Alexander the Midian writes in his Hiſtory of Animals, that there really was a creature in Lybia, which the Nomades call'ed a gorgon; it reſembled a wild ram, or as ſome affirm a calf; whoſe breath was of ſuch a poiſonous nature, as to kill all that approached it: in the ſame region the Catoblepton is found, a creature like a bull, whoſe eyes are ſo fixed in the head as chiefly to look downward; Pliny calls it Catoblepas, lib. viii. cap. 21. which is likewiſe ſuppoſed to kill with its eyes: the Gorgon (proceeds Athenæus) has its hair hanging over its eyes down from the forehead, of ſuch thickneſs that it ſcarce is able to remove it, to guide itſelf from danger; but it kills not by its breath, but with emanations darted from its eyes: the beaſt was well known in the time of Marius, for certain of his ſoldiers ſeeing it, miſtook it for a wild ſheep, and purſued to take it; but the hair being removed by the motion of its flying, it ſlew all upon whom it looked: at length the Nomades, who knew the nature of the beaſt, deſtroyed it with darts at a diſtance, and carried it to the general Marius. Howſoever little truth there be in this ſtory, it is a ſufficient ground for poetical fictions, and all the fables that are aſcribed to the Gorgon.

Straight from the direful coaſt to purer air
I ſpeed my flight, and to my mates repair.
My mates aſcend the ſhip; they ſtrike their oars;
The mountains leſſen, and retreat the ſhores;
Swift o'er the waves we fly; the freſh'ning gales
Sing thro' the ſhrouds, and ſtretch the ſwelling ſails.

v. 789. ——*To purer air*
I ſpeed my flight.——]

It may not probably be unpleaſant to the reader, to obſerve the manner how the two great poets Homer and Virgil cloſe the ſcene of their infernal adventures, by reſtoring their heroes to the earth. Ulyſſes returns by the ſame way he deſcended, of which we have a plain deſcription in the beginning of this book: Virgil takes a different method, he borrows his concluſion from another part of Homer; in which he deſcribes the two gates of ſleep; the one is ivory, the other of horn: through the ivory gate, iſſue falſhoods, through the gate of horn, truths: Virgil diſmiſſes Æneas through the gate of falſhood: now what is this, but to inform us that all he relates is nothing but a dream, and that dream a falſhood? I ſubmit it to the critics who are more diſpoſed to find fault than I am, to determine whether Virgil ought to be cenſured for ſuch an acknowledgment, or praiſed for his ingenuity?

THE

ODYSSEY.

*BOOK XII.

THE ARGUMENT.

The Sirens, Scylla, and Charybdis.

He relates, how after his return from the ſhades, he was ſent by Circe on his voyage, by the coaſt of the Sirens, and by the ſtreight of Scylla and Charybdis: the manner in which he eſcaped thoſe dangers: how being caſt on the iſland Trinacria, his companions deſtroyed the oxen of the ſun: the vengeance that followed; how all periſhed by ſhipwreck except himſelf, who ſwimming on the maſt of the ſhip, arrived on the iſland of Calypſo. With which his narration concludes.

THUS o'er the rolling ſurge the veſſel flies,
'Till from the waves th' Ææan hills ariſe.
Here the gay morn reſides in radiant bow'rs,
Here keeps her revels with the dancing hours;

* We are now drawing to a concluſion of the epiſodic narration of the Odyſſey; it may therefore be not unentertaining to ſpeak ſomething concerning the nature of it, before we diſmiſs it.

There are two ways of relating paſt ſubjects: the one, ſimply and methodically by a plain rehearſal, and this is the province of hiſtory; the other artificially, where the author makes no appearance in perſon, but introduces ſpeakers, and this is the practiſe of epic poetry. By this method the poet brings upon the ſtage thoſe very perſons who performed the action he repreſents: he makes them ſpeak and act over again the words and actions they ſpoke or performed before, and in ſome ſort tranſports his auditors to the time when, and the places where, the action was done. This method is of ſo great uſe, it prevents the poet from delivering his ſtory in a plain ſimple way like an hiſtorian, it makes the auditors witneſſes of it, and the

Here Phœbus riſing in th' ætherial way,
Thro' heav'n's bright portals pours the beamy day.

action diſcovers itſelf. Thus for inſtance, it is not Homer, but Ulyſſes who ſpeaks; the poet is withdrawn, and the hero whoſe ſtory we hear is as it were raiſed from the grave, and relates it in perſon to the audience. Ariſtotle obſerves, that the epic poem ought to be dramatic, that is active; Homer (ſays that author) ought to be eſpecially commended for being the only poet who knew exactly what to do; he ſpeaks little himſelf, but introduces ſome of his perſons, a man or a woman, a god or a goddeſs; and this renders his poem active or dramatic. Narration is the very ſoul that animates the poem, it gives an opportunity to the poet to adorn it with different epiſodes; it has, as it were, the whole world for its ſtage, and gives him liberty to ſearch through the creation for incidents or adventures for the employment of his heroes. Thus for inſtance, he was at liberty to aſcribe the ſeveral dangers of Scylla and Charybdis, of Polypheme and Antiphates, to Ulyſſes, though that hero had been as unacquainted with thoſe dangers, as Æneas was in reality with Dido; the choice of the epiſodes being not eſſential, but arbitrary.

In ſhort, it is from this epiſodic narration that the poet could at all find room to place theſe epiſodes in the Odyſſey. Ariſtotle, I confeſs, has ſet no preciſe limits to the time of the action, but the critics in general confine it to one campaign; at leaſt, they affirm this to be the moſt perfect duration, according to the model of the Iliad and Odyſſey. Now this epiſodic narration gives the poet an opportunity to relate all that is contained in four books without breaking in upon the time of the action; for all that we read between the eighth book and the thirteenth comprehends only the ſpace of one evening; namely, the evening of the thirty-third day. The poet inſerts all the adventures that happened to Ulyſſes in almoſt ten years from his departure from Troy, into the compaſs of one evening by way of narration, and ſo maintains the unity both of the time and action.

I ſpeak not of the narration in general; concerning which the curious may conſult Boſſu, or Dryden's preface to the tranſlation of the Æneis.

v. 1. *Thus o'er the rolling ſurge.*——] The words in the original are πόλαμοῖο ῥόον ὠκεανοῖο, which Strabo judges to mean no more than a part of the ocean, for if it be otherwiſe underſtood it will be a tautology, and who would write that "he went out of the ocean into the "ocean," as it muſt be rendered if πόλαμὸς be the ſame with θάλασσα in the next line? But it is perhaps better to underſtand the paſſage literally and plainly, only to denote the place from whence Ulyſſes returned from his infernal voyage; that is, from the extremity of the ocean. It is uſual for the waves of the ſea to bear violently and rapidly upon ſome ſhores, the waters being pent up by the nearneſs of the land,

At once we fix our halſers on the land,
At once deſcend, and preſs the deſert ſand;

and therefore form a current, or ῥόον. So that the expreſſion means no more than Ulyſſes ſurmounted this current and then gained the wide ocean.

It is likewiſe evident from the beginning of this book, that Ulyſſes paſſed only one night in hell; for he arrived at the Cimmerians in one day, ſaw the viſions of hell in one night, and in the ſpace of the next day returned from the Cimmerians in the evening to Circe's iſland, as appears from his going to repoſe immediately upon his landing.

It may be further proved that this was a nocturnal interview, from the nature of the magical incantations which were always performed by night; all ſacrifices were performed by night to the infernal powers, the offering itſelf was black, to repreſent the kingdom of darkneſs: thus alſo in other poets the moon is ſaid to turn pale at theſe magical rites, or as Virgil expreſſes it,

"Carmina vel cœlo poſſunt deducere lunam."

And indeed, as Euſtathius obſerves (from whom this note is chiefly tranſlated) it would have been abſurd to have repreſented the realms of darkneſs ſurveyed by the light of the day.

v. 3. *Here the gay morn reſides in radiant bow'rs,*
Here keeps her revels.——]

This paſſage is full of obſcurity: for how is it poſſible to ſuppoſe this iſland of Circe to be the reſidence of the morning; that is for the day to riſe immediately upon it, when it is known to lie in a weſtern ſituation? Some have imagined that this is ſpoken ſolely with reſpect to Ulyſſes, who returning from the ſhades, might properly ſay that he arrived at the place where the day reſides, that is to a place enlightened by the ſun. Others underſtand it comparatively, with reſpect to the Cimmerians, or rather to the realms of death, which Homer places in the weſt; with regard to theſe, Ææa may be ſaid to lie in the eaſt, or in the poetical language, to be the reſidence of the morning. Beſides, the Circæan promontory is of an extraordinary altitude, and conſequently the beams at ſun riſing may fall upon it; nay, it is ſaid to be illuſtrated by the ſun even by night. Others have conjectured, that what is here ſaid implies no more than that Ulyſſes landed upon the eaſtern parts of the iſland; and laſtly, others not improbably refer the whole to the word "ocean" in the former line, and then the whole paſſage will be clear, and agree with the fable of the ſun's riſing and ſetting in the ocean. This is what Euſtathius remarks, who adds, that the antients underſtood χόροι not to ſignify "dances," but χώροι the "regions of the morning." I have tranſlated it in the former ſenſe, according to the conſent of moſt interpreters: and I am perſuaded it is uſed to denote the pleaſure and

There worn and waſted, loſe our cares in ſleep
To the hoarſe murmurs of the rolling deep.
Soon as the morn reſtor'd the day, we pay'd
Sepulchral honours to Elpenor's ſhade.
Now by the ax the ruſhing foreſt bends,
And the huge pile along the ſhore deſcends.

gaiety which the ſun reſtores to the whole creation, when diſpelling the melancholy darkneſs, he reſtores light and gladneſs to the earth; which is imaged to us by the playing or dancing of the firſt beams of the ſun; or rather of Aurora, who properly may be ſaid to dance, being a goddeſs. Dacier renders χόρσι, dances; but judges that Homer here follows a fabulous geography, and that as he tranſported the Cimmerians with all their darkneſs from the Boſphorus to Campania; ſo likewiſe he now removes Ææa with all its light from Cholchis into Italy: and therefore the poet gives the properties and ſituation to the iſland of Circe, which are only true of the eaſtern Cholchis.

It is very evident (continues ſhe) that Homer was perfectly acquainted with the Phœnician ſtory; he tells us that Elpenor was buried upon the promontory on the ſea-ſhores, and that it was called by his name, Elpenor. Now the Phœnicians, who endeavoured to naturalize all names in their own language, affirmed, according to Bochart, that this promontory was not ſo called from Elpenor, but from their word Hilbinor, which ſignifies, "ubi albeſcit lux matutina;" that is, "where the dawning of the day begins to appear." This promontory being of great height, the rays of the morning might fall upon it; and this tradition might furniſh Homer with his fiction of the bowers, and dances of it.

What may ſeem to confirm Dacier's opinion of the tranſportation of Cholchis into Italy, is the immediate mention the poet makes of Jaſon, and Æætes king of Cholchis: beſides the ancients believed Phaſis, a river of Cholchis, to be the bounds of the habitable oriental world: and Ææa being the capital of it, lying upon the Phaſis, it might very rationally be miſtaken for ths place where the ſun roſe; thus Mimnermus writes,

Αἰήταο πόλιν τόθι τ' ὠκέος ἠελίοιο
Ἀκτῖνες χρυσέῳ κεῖνται ἔν θαλάμῳ
Ὠκεανῷ παρὰ χείλεσ' ἐν' ἄχεῖο θεῖο Ἰήσων.

That is, "The city of Æëtes where the rays of the ſun appear in "a bed of gold, above the margin of the ocean, where the divine Jaſon arrived." This is an evidence that the poet was well acquainted with antiquity, and that (as Strabo judges) his aſtoniſhing fictions have truth for their foundation.

Around we ſtand a melancholy train,
And a loud groan re-echoes from the main.
Fierce o'er the pyre, by fanning breezes ſpread,
The hungry flame devours the ſilent dead.
A riſing tomb, the ſilent dead to grace,
Faſt by the roarings of the main we place;
The riſing tomb a lofty column bore,
And high above it roſe the tap'ring oar.
Meantime the * goddeſs our return ſurvey'd
From the pale ghoſts, and hell's tremendous ſhade.
Swift ſhe deſcends: a train of nymphs divine
Bear the rich viands and the gen'rous wine:
In act to ſpeak the pow'r of magic ſtands,
And graceful thus accoſts the liſt'ning bands.
O ſons of woe! decreed by adverſe fates
Alive to paſs thro' hell's eternal gates!
All, ſoon or late, are doom'd that path to tread;
More wretched you! twice number'd with the dead!
This day adjourn your cares; exalt your ſouls,
Indulge the taſte, and drain the ſparkling bowls:
And when the morn unveils her ſaffron ray,
Spread your broad ſails, and plough the liquid way;
Lo I this night, your faithful guide, explain
Your woes by land, your dangers on the main.
The goddeſs ſpoke; in feaſts we waſte the day,
'Till Phœbus downward plung'd his burning ray;
Then ſable night aſcends, and balmy reſt
Seals ev'ry eye, and calms the troubled breaſt.
Then curious ſhe commands me to relate
The dreadful ſcenes of Pluto's dreary ſtate,
She ſat in ſilence while the tale I tell,
The wond'rous viſions, and the laws of hell.
Then thus: The lot of man the gods diſpoſe;
Theſe ills are paſt; now hear thy future woes.

* Circe.

O prince attend! ſome fav'ring pow'r be kind,
And print th' important ſtory on thy mind!
Next, where the Sirens dwell, you plough the ſeas;
Their ſong is death, and makes deſtruction pleaſe.

v. 51. *Next, where the Sirens dwell,*——] The critics have greatly laboured to explain what was the foundation of this fiction of the Sirens. We are told by ſome, that the Sirens were queens of certain ſmall iſlands, named Sirenuſæ, that lie near Capreæ in Italy, and chiefly inhabited the promontory of Minerva, upon the top of which that goddeſs had a temple, as ſome affirm, built by Ulyſſes, according to this verſe of Seneca, Epiſt. lxxvii.

"Alta procelloſo ſpeculatur vertice Pallas."

Here, there was a renowned academy in the reign of the Sirens, famous for eloquence and the liberal ſciences, which gave occaſion for the invention of this fable of the ſweetneſs of the voice, and attracting ſongs of the Sirens. But why then are they fabled to be deſtroyers, and painted in ſuch dreadful colours? we are told that at laſt the ſtudents abuſed their knowledge, to the colouring of wrong, the corruption of manners, and ſubverſion of government; that is, in the language of poetry, they were feigned to be transformed into monſters, and with their muſic to have inticed paſſengers to their ruin, who there conſumed their patrimonies, and poiſoned their virtues with riot and effeminacy. The place is now called Maſſa. In the days of Homer the Sirens were fabled to be two only in number, as appears from his ſpeaking of them in the duel, as ὅπα Σειρήνοιϊν, νῖσον Σειρήνοιϊν; their names (adds Euſtathius) were Thelxiepæa, and Aglaopheme. Other writers in particular Lycophron, mention three Sirens, Ligæa, Parthenope, and Leucoſia. Some are of opinion (continues the ſame author) that they were ψαλτρίας καὶ ἑταιρίδας; that is, "ſinging women and harlots," who by the ſweetneſs of their voices drew the unwary to ruin their health and fortune. Others tell us of a certain bay contracted within winding ſtreights and broken cliffs, which by the ſinging of the winds, and beating of the waters, returns a delightful harmony, that allures the paſſenger to approach, who is immediately thrown againſt the rocks, and ſwallowed up by the violent eddies.

But others underſtand the whole paſſage allegorically, or as a fable containing an excellent moral, to ſhew that if we ſuffer ourſelves to be too much allured by the pleaſures of an idle life, the end will be deſtruction: thus Horace moralizes it;

"——Vitanda eſt improba Siren
"Deſidia."——

But the fable may be applied to all pleaſures in general, which if too eagerly purſued betray the uncautious into ruin; while wiſe men, like Ulyſſes, making uſe of their reaſon ſtop their ears againſt their inſinuations.

Unbleſt the man, whom muſic wins to ſtay
Nigh the curſt ſhore, and liſten to the lay;
No more that wretch ſhall view the joys of life,
His blooming offspring, or his beauteous wife!
In verdant meads they ſport, and wide around
Lie human bones, that whiten all the ground;
The ground polluted floats with human gore,
And human carnage taints the dreadful ſhore.
Fly ſwift the dang'rous coaſt; let ev'ry ear
Be ſtopp'd againſt the ſong! 'tis death to hear!
Firm to the maſt with chains thyſelf be bound,
Nor truſt thy virtue to th' enchanting ſound.
If mad with tranſport, freedom thou demand,
Be ev'ry fetter ſtrain'd, and added band to band.
These ſeas o'erpaſs'd, be wiſe! but I refrain
To mark diſtinct thy voyage o'er the main:
New horrours riſe! let prudence be thy guide,
And guard thy various paſſage thro' the tide.
High o'er the main two rocks exalt their brow,
The boiling billows thund'ring roll below;

v. 57. ——— *Around*
Lie human bones, that whiten all the ground.]

There is a great ſimilitude between this paſſage and the words of Solomon in the proverbs, where there is a moſt beautiful deſcription of an harlot, in the eighth and ninth chapters.

" I beheld among the ſimple ones, I diſcerned among the youths, " a young woman void of underſtanding; and behold there met him " a woman with the attire of an harlot, and ſubtle of heart, &c. " With her much fair ſpeech ſhe cauſed him to yield, ſhe forced " him with the flattering of her lips; he goeth after her ſtraight- " way, as an ox goeth to the ſlaughter, but he knoweth not that the " dead are there, and her gueſts are in the depths of hell."

This may ſerve for a comment upon Homer, and it is an inſtance, that without any violence the nature of harlots may be concealed under the fables of the Sirens.

v. 71. *High o'er the main two rocks*——] There is undoubtedly a great amplification in the deſcription of Scylla and Charybdis; it may not therefore be unneceſſary to lay before the reader, what is truth and what fiction.

Thro' the vaſt waves the dreadful wonders move,
Hence nam'd erratic by the gods above.

Thucydides, lib. iv. thus deſcribes it. "This ſtreight is the ſea "that flows between Rhegium and Meſſenè, where at the narroweſt "diſtance, Sicily is divided from the continent; and this is part of "the ſea which Ulyſſes is ſaid to have paſſed, and it is called Cha-"rybdis: this ſea, by reaſon of the ſtreights, and the concourſe of "the Tyrrhene and Sicilian ſeas breaking violently into it, and there "raiſing great commotions, is with good reaſon called χαλεπὴ, or "deſtructive." Charybdis ſtands on the coaſt of Sicily; Scylla on the "coaſt of Italy.

Mr. Sandys examined theſe rocks and ſeas with a particular view to the deſcriptions of the poets: ſpeaking of Charybdis, he writes, "When the winds begin to ruffle, eſpecially from the ſouth, it forth-"with runs round with violent eddies, ſo that many veſſels miſcarry "by it. The ſtream through the ſtreight runs toward the Ionian, "and part of it ſets into the haven, which turning about, and meet-"ing with other ſtreams, makes ſo violent an encounter that ſhips "are glad to prevent the danger by coming to an anchor. Scylla, "adds he, is ſeated in the midſt of a bay, upon the neck of a nar-"row mountain, which thruſts itſelf into the ſea, having at the up-"permoſt end a ſteep high rock, ſo celebrated by the poets, and "hyperbolically deſcribed by Homer as inacceſſible. The fables "are indeed well fitted to the place, there being divers little ſharp "rocks at the foot of the greater: theſe are the dogs that are ſaid to "bark there, the waters by their repercuſſion from them make a "noiſe like the barking of dogs; and the reaſon why Scylla is ſaid "to devour the fiſhes, as Homer expreſſes it,

When ſtung with hunger ſhe embroils the flood,
The ſea-dog and the dolphin are her food;
She makes the huge leviathan her prey,
And all the monſters of the wat'ry way.

"The reaſon of this is, becauſe the rocks are frequented by lamprons, "and greater fiſhes, that devour the bodies of the drowned. But "Scylla is now without danger, the current not ſetting upon it; and "I much wonder at the proverb,

"Incidit in Scyllam qui vult vitare Charybdim,"

"when they ſtand twelve miles diſtant: I rather conjecture, adds he, "that there has been more than one Charybdis, occaſioned by the "recoiling ſtreams: as there is one between the ſouth end of this "bay of Scylla and the oppoſite point of Sicily; there the waves "juſtling make a violent eddy, which when the winds are rough, "more than threaten deſtruction to ſhips, as I have heard from the "Scyllians, when ſeeking perhaps to avoid the then more impetuous "turning, they have been driven by weather upon the not far diſtant "Scylla."

No bird of air, no dove of ſwifteſt wing,
That bears ambroſia to th' ætherial king,

Strabo (as Euſtathius remarks) ſpeaking of the Leontines, ſays, that they were an unhoſpitable people, Cyclopeans, and Læſtrigons: and adds, that Scylla and Charybdis were inhabited by robbers and murderers. From the terrible ſituation of theſe rocks, and the murders and depredations of the robbers, theſe fictions might ariſe: they might murder ſix of the companions of Ulyſſes, and throw them into the ſea from Scylla, which may be expreſſed in their being ſaid to be ſwallowed up by that monſter.

Bochart judges that the names of Scylla and Charybdis are of Phœnician extract, the one derived from Sool, which ſignifies loſs and ruin, the other from Chorabdam, which implies the abyſs of deſtruction.

It is highly probable that theſe rocks were more dangerous formerly than at theſe times, the violence of the waters may not only have enlarged their channel by time, but by throwing up banks and ſands have diverted their courſe from bearing upon theſe rocks with the ſame violence as antiently; add to this, that men by art may have contributed to render theſe ſeas more ſafe, being places of great reſort and navigation. Beſides, the unſkilfulneſs of the antients in ſea affairs, and the ſmallneſs and form of their veſſels, might render thoſe ſeas very dangerous to them, which are ſafe to modern navigators.

v. 74. *Hence nam'd erratic.*——] It will reconcile the reader in ſome meaſure to the boldneſs of theſe fictions, if he conſiders that Homer to render his poetry more marvellous, joins what has been related of the Symplegades, to the deſcription of Scylla and Charybdis: ſuch a fiction of the juſtling of theſe rocks could not be ſhocking to the antients, who had before heard of the ſame property in the Symplegades. The whole fable is perhaps grounded upon appearance: navigators looking upon theſe rocks at a diſtance, might in different views, according to the poſition of the ſhip, ſometimes ſee them in a direct line, and then they would appear to join, and after they had paſſed a little further they might look upon them obliquely, and then they would be diſcovered to be at ſome diſtance; and this might give occaſion to the fable of their meeting and recoiling alternately. Strabo agrees, that Homer borrowed his deſcription of Scylla and Charybdis from the Symplegades; Homer (ſays he) deſcribes theſe, like the Cyanean rocks; he continually lays the foundation of his fables upon ſome well known hiſtory: thus he feigns theſe rocks to be full of dangers and horrours, according to the relations of the Cyanean, which from their juſtling are called Symplegades.

v. 75. ——*No dove of ſwifteſt wing,*
That bears ambroſia to th' ætherial king.]

What might give Homer this notion, might be what is related of

Shuns the dire rocks: in vain ſhe cuts the ſkies,
The dire rocks meet, and cruſh her as ſhe flies;
Not the fleet bark, when proſp'rous breezes play,
Ploughs o'er that roaring ſurge its deſperate way;
O'erwhelm'd it ſinks: while round a ſmoke expires,
And the waves flaſhing ſeem to burn with fires.
Scarce the fam'd Argo paſs'd theſe raging floods,
The ſacred Argo, fill'd with demigods!
Ev'n ſhe had ſunk, but Jove's imperial bride
Wing'd her fleet ſail, and puſh'd her o'er the tide.
High in the air the rock its ſummit ſhrouds,
In brooding tempeſts, and in rolling clouds;
Loud ſtorms around and miſts eternal riſe,
Beat its bleak brow, and intercept the ſkies.
When all the broad expanſion bright with day
Glows with th' autumnal or the ſummer ray,

the Symplegades. Phineus being aſked by Jaſon if he could paſs thoſe rocks in ſafety, he deſires to know how ſwift the veſſel was; Jaſon anſwers, as ſwift as a dove; Then, ſaid Phineus, ſend a dove between the rocks, and if ſhe eſcapes, you may paſs in ſafety: Jaſon complies, and the pigeon in her paſſage loſt only her tale, that hero immediately ſets ſail, and eſcapes with the loſs only of his rudder: this ſtory being reported of the Symplegades, might give Homer the hint of applying the cruſhing of the doves to Scylla and Charybdis. You may find in Euſtathius ſeveral far-fetched notions upon this paſſage, but I ſhall paſs them over in ſilence. Longinus blames it, and I have ventured in the tranſlation to omit that particular which occaſioned his cenſure.

v. 85. ——*Jove's imperial bride*
Wing'd her fleet ſail,——]

A poet ſhould endeavour to raiſe his images and expreſſions, as far as poſſible above meanneſs and vulgarity: in this reſpect no poet was ever more happy than Homer: this place is an inſtance of it; it means no more than that while Jaſon made his voyage he had favourable winds and ſerene air. As Juno is frequently uſed in Homer to denote air, he aſcribes the proſperous wind to that goddeſs, who preſides over the air: Thus in poetry, Juno

Wing'd her fleet ſail, and puſh'd her o'er the tide.

Euſtathius.

The ſummer and the autumn glow in vain,
The ſky for ever low'rs, for ever clouds remain.
Impervious to the ſtep of man it ſtands,
Tho' borne by twenty feet, tho' arm'd with twenty hands;
Smooth as the poliſh of the mirrour riſe
The ſlippery ſides, and ſhoot into the ſkies.
Full in the centre of this rock diſplay'd,
A yawning cavern caſts a dreadful ſhade:
Nor the fleet arrow from the twanging bow,
Sent with full force, could reach the depth below.
Wide to the weſt the horrid gulf extends,
And the dire paſſage down to hell deſcends.
O fly the dreadful ſight! expand thy ſails,
Ply the ſtrong oar, and catch the nimble gales;
Here Scylla bellows from her dire abodes,
Tremendous peſt! abhorr'd by men and gods!
Hideous her voice, and with leſs terrour roar
The whelps of lions in the midnight hour.

v. 104. *And the dire paſſage down to hell deſcends.*] Homer means by hell, the regions of death, and uſes it to teach us that there is no paſſing by this rock without deſtruction, or in Homer's words it is a ſure paſſage into the kingdom of death. Euſtathius.

v. 109. ——*With leſs terrours roar*
The whelps of lions.——]

The words in the original are, σκύλακος νεογιλῆς, which in the proper and immediate ſenſe do not confine it to the whelps of a lion, but to whelps in general, and perhaps chiefly of the canine kind: νεογιλὸν Euſtathius interprets νεωστὶ γινόμενον, or newly whelped, and in the latter ſenſe the paſſage is underſtood by that author; for he writes, φωνὴ σκύλακος ὀλίγη, Σκύλλη δὲ μεγὰ κακὸν; that is, "the voice of "a whelp is low, but Scylla is deſcribed as an huge monſter;" and the poet uſes it as we do this expreſſion; "The voice of a wicked "man is ſoft, but his deeds are miſchievous and abominable." I have adventured to tranſlate the words in the other ſenſe, after moſt interpreters, for Homer expreſſes the voice of Scylla by Δεινὸν λελακυῖα, or, "uttering a dreadful noiſe:" now what he calls her voice, is nothing but the roaring of the waves in ſtorms when they beat againſt that rock; and this being very loud, is better repreſented by the

Twelve feet deform'd and foul the fiend diſpreads ;
Six horrid necks ſhe rears, and ſix terrific heads ;
Her jaws grin dreadful with three rows of teeth ;
Jaggy they ſtand, the gaping den of death ;
Her parts obſcene the raging billows hide ;
Her boſom terribly o'erlooks the tide.
When ſtung with hunger ſhe embroils the flood,
The ſea-dog, and the dolphin are her food ;
She makes the huge leviathan her prey,
And all the monſters of the wat'ry way ;
The ſwifteſt racer of the azure plain
Here fills her ſails and ſpreads her oars in vain ;
Fell Scylla riſes, in her fury roars,
At once ſix mouths expands, at once ſix men devours.
Cloſe by, a rock of leſs enormous height
Breaks the wild waves, and forms a dang'rous ſtreight ;
Full on its crown a fig's green branches riſe,
And ſhoot a leafy foreſt to the ſkies ;

roaring of a lion, than the complaining of a young whelp. Chapman follows Euſtathius.

For here the whuling Scylla ſhrouds her face,
That breathes a voice, at all parts, no more baſe
Than are a newly-kitten'd kittling's cries.

Which is really burleſque enough. Dacier renders the word by "rugiſſement d'un jeune lion," or the roarings of a young lion.

v. 118. *The ſea-dog and the dolphin are her food.*] Polybius (as Strabo remarks) contends, that Homer in all his fictions alludes to the cuſtoms of antiquity : for inſtance, Scylla was a famous fiſhery for taking ſuch fiſhes as Homer mentions : this was the manner of taking the ſea-dog ; ſeveral ſmall boats went out only with two men in each, the one rowed, the other ſtood with his inſtrument ready to ſtrike the fiſh ; all the boats had one ſpeculator in common, to give notice when the fiſh approached, which uſually ſwam with more than half of the body above water : Ulyſſes is this ſpeculator, who ſtands armed with his ſpear ; and it is probable, adds Polybius, that Homer thought Ulyſſes really viſited Scylla, ſince he aſcribes to Scylla that manner of fiſhing which is really practiſed by the Scyllians.

v. 127. *Full on its crown a fig's green branches riſe.*] Theſe particularities, which ſeem of no conſequence, have a very good ef-

Beneath, Charybdis holds her boiſt'rous reign
'Midſt roaring whirlpools, and abſorbs the main;
Thrice in her gulfs the boiling ſeas ſubſide,
Thrice in dire thunders ſhe refunds the tide.
Oh if thy veſſel plough the direful waves
When ſeas retreating roar within her caves,
Ye periſh all! tho' he who rules the main
Lend his ſtrong aid, his aid he lends in vain.
Ah ſhun the horrid gulf! by Scylla fly,
'Tis better ſix to loſe, than all to die.
I then: O nymph propitious to my pray'r,
Goddeſs divine, my guardian pow'r declare,

feſt in poetry, as they give the relation an air of truth and probability. For what can induce a poet to mention ſuch a tree, if the tree were not there in reality? Neither is this fig-tree deſcribed in vain, it is the means of preſerving the life of Ulyſſes in the ſequel of the ſtory. The poet deſcribes the fig-tree loaded with leaves; even this circumſtance is of uſe, for the branches would then bend downward to the ſea by their weight, and be reached by Ulyſſes more eaſily. It ſhews likewiſe, that this ſhipwreck was not in winter, for then the branches are naked. Euſtathius.

Dacier gathers from hence, that the ſeaſon was autumn, meaning the time when Ulyſſes arrived among the Phæacians; but this is a miſtake, for he was caſt upon the Ogygian coaſt by this ſtorm, and there remained with Calypſo many years. The branch with which Ulyſſes girds his loins in the ſixth book is deſcribed with leaves, and that is indeed a full proof that he was thrown upon the Phæacian ſhores before the ſeaſon in which trees ſhed their leaves, and probably in the autumn.

v. 131. *Thrice in her gulfs the boiling ſeas ſubſide,*
Thrice in dire thunders ſhe refunds the tide]

Strabo quotes this paſſage to prove, that Homer underſtood the flux and reflux of the ocean. "An inſtance, ſays he, of the care that "poet took to inform himſelf in all things, is what he writes con- "cerning the tides, for he calls the reflux ἀνῳορρὸν, or the revolution "of the waters: he tells us, that Scylla (it ſhould be Charybdis) "thrice ſwallows, and thrice refunds the waves; this muſt be un- "derſtood of regular tides." There are indeed but two tides in a day, but this is the error of the librarians, who put τρὶς for δὶς. Euſtathius ſolves the expreſſion of the three tides differently, it ought to be underſtood of the νυχθήμερον, of the ſpace of the night and day, and then there will be a regular flux and reflux thrice in that time, or every eight hours periodically.

Is the foul fiend from vengeance freed?
Or if I riſe in arms, can Scylla bleed?
Then ſhe: O worn by toils, oh broke in fight,
Still are new toils and war thy dire delight?
Will martial flames for ever fire thy mind,
And never, never be to heav'n reſign'd?
How vain thy efforts to avenge the wrong?
Deathleſs the peſt! impenetrably ſtrong!
Furious and fell, tremendous to behold!
Ev'n with a look ſhe withers all the bold!
She mocks the weak attempts of human might;
O fly her rage! thy conqueſt is thy flight.
If but to ſeize thy arms thou makſt delay,
Again the fury vindicates her prey,
Her ſix mouths yawn, and ſix are ſnatch'd away.
From her foul womb Cratæis gave to air
This dreadful peſt! To her direct thy pray'r,
To curb the monſter in her dire abodes,
And guard thee thro' the tumult of the floods.
Thence to Trinacria's ſhore you bend your way,
Where graze thy herds, illuſtrious ſource of day!

v. 142. *Or if I riſe in arms, can Scylla bleed?*] This ſhort queſtion excellently declares the undaunted ſpirit of this hero; Circe lays before him the moſt affrighting danger; Ulyſſes immediately offers to encounter it, to revenge the death of his friends, and the poet artfully at the ſame time makes that goddeſs launch into the praiſe of his intrepidity; a judicious method to exalt the character of his hero. Dacier.

v. 156. —— *Cratæis gave to air*
This dreadful peſt. ——]

It is not very evident who this Cratæis is whom the poet makes the mother of Scylla: Euſtathius informs us that it is Hecate, a goddeſs very properly recommended by Circe; ſhe, like Circe, being the preſident over ſorceries and enchantments. But why ſhould ſhe be ſaid to be the mother of Scylla? Dacier imagines that Homer ſpeaks ænigmatically, and intends to teach us that theſe monſters are merely the creation or offſpring of magic, or poetry.

v. 161. *Where graze thy herds.* ——] This fiction concerning the immortal herds of Apollo is bold, but founded upon truth

Sev'n herds, ſev'n flocks enrich the ſacred plains,
Each herd, each flock full fifty heads contains;
The wond'rous kind a length of age ſurvey,
By breed increaſe not, nor by death decay.
Two ſiſter goddeſſes poſſeſs the plain,
The conſtant guardians of the woolly train;
Lampetie fair, and Phaethuſa young,
From Phœbus and the bright Neæra ſprung:
Here watchful o'er the flocks, in ſhady bow'rs
And flow'ry meads they waſte the joyous hours.
Rob not the god! and ſo propitious gales
Attend thy voyage, and impel thy ſails;
But if thy impious hands the flocks deſtroy,
The gods, the gods avenge it, and ye die!
'Tis thine alone, (thy friends and navy loſt)
Thro' tedious toils to view thy native coaſt.
She ceas'd: and now aroſe the morning ray;
Swift to her dome the goddeſs held her way.

and reality. Nothing is more certain than that in ancient times whole herds of cattle were conſecrated to the gods, and were therefore ſacred and inviolable: theſe being always of a fixed number, neither more nor leſs than at the firſt conſecration, the poet feigns that they never bred or increaſed: and being conſtantly ſupplied upon any vacancy, they were fabled to be immortal, or never to decay; (for the ſame cauſe one of the moſt famous legions of antiquity was called immortal.) Euſtathius informs us, that they were labouring oxen employed in tillage, and that it was eſteemed a particular profanation to deſtroy a labouring ox: it was criminal to eat of it, nay it was forbid to be offered even in ſacrifices to the gods, and a crime puniſhable with death by the laws of Solon. So that the moral intended by Homer in this violation of the herds of Apollo is, that in our utmoſt neceſſity we ought not to offend the gods. As to the flocks of ſheep, Herodotus informs us, that in Apollonia along the Ionian gulf, flocks of ſheep were conſecrated to that deity, and were therefore inviolable.

v. 179. *Swift to her dome the goddeſs held her way.*] It is very judicious in the poet not to amuſe us with repeating the compliments that paſſed between theſe two lovers at parting: the commerce Ulyſſes held with Circe was ſo far from contributing to the end of the Odyſſey, that it was one of the greateſt impediments

Then to my mates I meaſur'd back the plain,
Climb'd the tall bark, and ruſh'd into the main;
Then bending to the ſtroke, their oars they drew
To their broad breaſts, and ſwift the galley flew.
Up-ſprung a briſker breeze; with freſhning gales
The friendly goddeſs ſtretch'd the ſwelling ſails;
We drop our oars; at eaſe the pilot guides;
The veſſel light along the level glides.
When riſing ſad and ſlow, with penſive look,
Thus to the melancholy train I ſpoke:
O friends, oh ever partners of my woes,
Attend while I what heav'n foredooms diſcloſe,
Hear all! Fate hangs o'er all! on you it lies
To live, or periſh! to be ſafe, be wiſe!
In flow'ry meads the ſportive Sirens play,
Touch the ſoft lyre, and tune the vocal lay;
Me, me alone, with fetters firmly bound,
The gods allow to hear the dang'rous ſound.
Hear and obey: if freedom I demand,
Be ev'ry fetter ſtrain'd, be added band to band.
While yet I ſpeak the winged galley flies,
And lo! the Siren ſhores like miſts ariſe.
Sunk were at once the winds; the air above,
And waves below, at once forgot to move!
Some dæmon calm'd the air, and ſmooth'd the deep,
Huſh'd the loud winds, and charm'd the waves to ſleep.

to it; and therefore Homer diſmiſſes that ſubject in a few words, and paſſes on directly to the great ſufferings and adventures of his hero, which are eſſential to the poem. But it may not be unneceſſary to obſerve, how artfully the poet connects this epiſode of Circe with the thread of it; he makes even the goddeſs who detains him from his country contribute to his return thither, by the advice ſhe gives him how to eſcape the dangers of the ocean, and how to behave in the difficult emergencies of his voyages: it is true ſhe detains him out of fondneſs, but yet this very fondneſs is of uſe to him, ſince it makes a goddeſs his inſtructor, and as it were a guide to his country.

Now ev'ry ſail we furl, each oar we ply;
Laſh'd by the ſtroke the frothy waters fly.
The ductile wax with buſy hands I mould,
And cleft in fragments, and the fragments roll'd;
Th' aerial region now grew warm with day,
The wax diſſolv'd beneath the burning ray;
Then ev'ry ear I barr'd againſt the ſtrain,
And from exceſs of phrenzy lock'd the brain.
Now round the maſt my mates the fetters roll'd,
And bound me limb by limb, with fold on fold;
Then bending to the ſtroke, the active train
Plunge all at once their oars, and cleave the main.
While to the ſhore the rapid veſſel flies,
Our ſwift approach the Siren quire deſcries
Celeſtial muſic warbles from their tongue,
And thus the ſwift deluders tune the ſong.
O ſtay, oh pride of Greece! Ulyſſes ſtay!
O ceaſe thy courſe, and liſten to our lay!

v. 222. *O ſtay, oh pride of Greece! Ulyſſes ſtay!*] There are ſeveral things remarkable in this ſhort ſong of the Sirens: one of the firſt words they ſpeak is the name of Ulyſſes, this ſhews that they had a kind of omniſcience; and it could not fail of raiſing the curioſity of a wiſe man, to be acquainted with perſons of ſuch extenſive knowledge: the ſong is well adapted to the character of Ulyſſes: it is not pleaſure or dalliance with which they tempt that hero, but a promiſe of wiſdom, and a recital of the war of Troy and his own glory. Cicero was ſo pleaſed with theſe verſes, that he tranſlated them, lib. v. De Finibus Bon. & Mal.

" O decus Argolicum, quin puppim flectis Ulyſſes,
" Auribus ut noſtros poſſis agnoſcere cantus?
" Nam nemo hæc unquam eſt tranſvectus cærula curſu,
" Quin prius adſtiterit vocum dulcedine captus;
" Poſt, variis avido ſatiatus pectore muſis,
" Doctior ad patrias lapſus pervenerit oras.
" Nos grave certamen belli, clademque tenemus
" Græcia quam Trojæ divino numine vexit,
" Omniaque elatis rerum veſtigia terris."

Homer ſaw (ſays Tully) that his fable could not be approved, if he made his hero to be taken with a mere ſong: the Sirens therefore promiſe knowledge, the deſire of which might probably prove

Bleſt is the man ordain'd our voice to hear,
The ſong inſtructs the ſoul, and charms the ear.
Approach! thy ſoul ſhall into raptures riſe!
Approach! and learn new wiſdom from the wiſe!
We know whate'er the kings of mighty name
Atchiev'd at Ilion in the field of fame;
Whate'er beneath the ſun's bright journey lies.
O ſtay and learn new wiſdom from the wiſe!
Thus the ſweet charmers warbled o'er the main;
My ſoul takes wing to meet the heav'nly ſtrain;
I give the ſign, and ſtruggle to be free:
Swift row my mates, and ſhoot along the ſea;
New chains they add, and rapid urge the way,
'Till dying off, the diſtant ſounds decay:
Then ſcudding ſwiftly from the dang'rous ground,
The deafen'd ear unlock'd, the chains unbound.
Now all at once tremendous ſcenes unfold;
Thunder'd the deeps, the ſmoking billows roll'd!

ſtronger than the love of his country; to deſire to know all things, whether uſeful or trifles, is a faulty curioſity; but to be led from the contemplation of things great and noble, to a thirſt of knowledge, is an inſtance of a greatneſs of ſoul.

v. 241. ——— *the ſmoking billows roll'd.*] What is to be underſtood by the ſmoke of the billows? Does the poet mean a real fire ariſing from the rocks? Moſt of the critics have judged that the rock vomited out flames; for Homer mentions in the beginning of this book,

——Πυρὸς τ' ὀλοοῖο Θύελλαι.

I have taken the liberty to tranſlate both theſe paſſages in a different ſenſe; by the ſmoke I underſtand the miſts that ariſe from the commotion and daſhing of the waters, and by the "ſtorms of fire," (as Homer expreſſes it) the reflexions the water caſts in ſuch agitations that reſemble flames; thus in ſtorms literally

"——— Ardeſcunt ignibus undæ."

Scylla and Charybdis are in a continual ſtorm, and may therefore be ſaid to emit flames. I have ſoftened the expreſſion in the tranſlation by inſerting the word "ſeem."

Ulyſſes continues upon one of theſe rocks ſeveral hours; that is, from morning till noon, as appears from the concluſion of this

Tumultuous waves embroil'd the bellowing flood,
All trembling, deafen'd, and aghaſt we ſtood!
No more the veſſel plough'd the dreadful wave,
Fear ſeiz'd the mighty, and unnerv'd the brave;
Each dropp'd his oar: but ſwift from man to man
With look ſerene I turn'd, and thus began.
O friends! oh often try'd in adverſe ſtorms!
With ills familiar in more dreadful forms!
Deep in the dire Cyclopean den you lay,
Yet ſafe return'd — Ulyſſes led the way.

book; for leaping from the float, he laid hold upon a fig-tree that grew upon Charybdis; but both the fig-tree and Ulyſſes muſt have been conſumed, if the rock had really emitted flames.

v. 250. *Deep in the dire Cyclopean den you lay,*
Yet ſafe return'd — Ulyſſes led the way.]

Plutarch excellently explains this paſſage in his diſſertation, How a man may praiſe himſelf without blame or envy: "Ulyſſes (ſays "that author) ſpeaks not out of vanity; he ſaw his companions "terrified with the noiſe, tumult, and ſmoke of the gulfs of "Scylla and Charybdis; he therefore to give them courage, re-"minds them of his wiſdom and valour, which they found had "frequently extricated them from other dangers: this is not vain-"glory or boaſting, but the dictate of wiſdom; to infuſe courage "into his friends, he engages his virtue, proweſs and capacity for "their ſafety, and ſhews what confidence they ought to repoſe in "his conduct." Virgil put the words of Ulyſſes in the mouth of Æneas.

"O ſocii, neque enim ignari ſumus ante malorum,
"O paſſi graviora; dabit deus his quoque finem.
"Vos & Scyllæam rabiem penituſque ſonantes
"Acceſtis ſcopulos: vos & Cyclopea ſaxa
"Experti, revocate animos, mœſtumque timorem
"Mittite. Forſan & hæc olim meminiſſe juvabit."

It muſt be allowed, that Virgil has improved what he borrows; it tends more to confirm the courage of his friends than what Ulyſſes ſpeaks: Macrobius is of this opinion; Saturn. lib. v. cap. 11. Ulyſſes lays before his companions only one inſtance of his conduct in eſcaping dangers, Æneas mentions a ſecond: there is ſomething more ſtrong in

"—— Forſan & hæc olim meminiſſe juvabit,"

than in καὶ ποῦ τῶν μνήσεσθαι ὀίω; not only as it gives them hope to eſcape, but as it is an aſſurance that this very danger ſhall be

Learn courage hence! and in my care confide:
Lo! ſtill the ſame Ulyſſes is your guide!
Attend my words! your oars inceſſant ply;
Strain ev'ry nerve, and bid the veſſel fly.
If from yon' juſtling rocks and wavy war
Jove ſafety grants; he grants it to your care.
And thou whoſe guiding hand directs our way,
Pilot, attentive liſten and obey!
Bear wide thy courſe, nor plough thoſe angry waves
Where rolls yon' ſmoke, yon' tumbling ocean raves;
Steer by the higher rock; leſt whirl'd around
We ſink, beneath the circling eddy drown'd.
  While yet I ſpeak, at once their oars they ſeize,
Stretch to the ſtroke, and bruſh the working ſeas.
Cautious the name of Scylla I ſuppreſt;
That dreadful ſound had chill'd the boldeſt breaſt.
  Meantime forgetful of the voice divine,
All dreadful bright my limbs in armour ſhine;

a pleaſure, and add to their future happineſs: it is not only an argument of reſolution but conſolation. Scaliger agrees with Macrobius, "Ex ipſis periculis proponit voluptatem: nihil enim jucundius eâ "memoriâ quæ periculorum evaſionem, victoriamque recordatione "repræſentat."

v. 268. ——— *forgetful of the voice divine,*
All dreadful bright my limbs in armour ſhine.]

This ſeemingly ſmall circumſtance is not without a good effect: it ſhews that Ulyſſes even by the injunction of a goddeſs, cannot lay aſide the hero. It is not out of a particular care of his own ſafety that he arms himſelf, for he takes his ſtand in the moſt open dangerous part of the veſſel. It is an evidence likewiſe that the death of his companions is not owing to a want of his protection; for it is plain that, as Horace expreſſes it,

"Dum ſibi, dum ſociis reditum parat, aſpera multa
"Pertulit"

By this conduct we ſee likewiſe, that all the parts of the Odyſſey are conſiſtent, and that the ſame care of his companions, which Homer aſcribes to Ulyſſes in the firſt lines of it, is viſible through the whole poem.

High on the deck I take my dang'rous ſtand,
Two glitt'ring jav'lins lighten in my hand;
Prepar'd to whirl the whizzing ſpear I ſtay,
'Till the fell fiend ariſe to ſeize her prey.
Around the dungeon, ſtudious to behold
The hideous peſt, my labouring eyes I roll'd;
In vain! the diſmal dungeon dark as night
Veils the dire monſter, and confounds the ſight.
Now thro' the rocks, appal'd with deep diſmay,
We bend our courſe, and ſtem the deſp'rate way;
Dire Scylla there a ſcene of horrour forms,
And here Charybdis fills the deep with ſtorms.
When the tide ruſhes from her rumbling caves
The rough rock roars; tumultuous boils the waves;
They toſs, they foam, a wild confuſion raiſe,
Like waters bubbling o'er the fiery blaze;
Eternal miſts obſcure th' aerial plain,
And high above the rock ſhe ſpouts the main;
When in her gulfs the ruſhing ſea ſubſides,
She drains the ocean with the refluent tides:
The rock rebellows with a thund'ring ſound;
Deep, wond'rous deep below, appears the ground.
Struck with deſpair, with trembling hearts we view'd
The yawning dungeon, and the tumbling flood,

v. 283 *The rough rock roars———*] I doubt not every reader who is acquainted with Homer, has taken notice in this book, how he all along adapts his verſes to the horrible ſubject he deſcribes, and paints the roaring of the ocean in words as ſonorous as that element. Δεινὸν ἀνερρόϊβδησε — τρὶς ἀναρροιβδεῖ — ἀναβρόξειε — βόμβησεν, &c. "Subjicit rem oculis, & aurium noſtrarum do-"minus eſt," ſays Scaliger. It is impoſſible to preſerve the beauty of Homer, in a language ſo much inferiour; but I have endeavoured to imitate what I could not equal. I have clogged the verſe with the roughneſs and identity of a letter, which is the harſheſt our language affords; and clogged it with monoſyllables, that the concourſe of the rough letters might be more quick and cloſe in the pronunciation, and the moſt open and ſounding vowel occur in every word.

When lo! fierce Scylla ſtoop'd to ſeize her prey,
Stretch'd her dire jaws, and ſwept ſix men away;
Chiefs of renown! loud echoing ſhrieks ariſe;
I turn and view them quivering in the ſkies;
They call, and aid with out-ſtretch'd arms implore:
In vain they call! thoſe arms are ſtretch'd no more.
As from ſome rock that overhangs the floods,
The ſilent fiſher caſts th' inſidious food,
With fraudful care he waits the finny prize,
And ſudden lifts it quivering to the ſkies:
So the foul monſter lifts her prey on high,
So pant the wretches ſtruggling in the ſky;
In the wide dungeon ſhe devours her food,
And the fleſh trembles while ſhe churns the blood.
Worn as I am with griefs, with care decay'd;
Never, I never, ſcene ſo dire ſurvey'd!
My ſhiv'ring blood, congeal'd, forgot to flow;
Aghaſt I ſtood, a monument of woe!
Now from the rocks the rapid veſſel flies,
And the hoarſe din like diſtant thunder dies;
To Sol's bright iſle our voyage we purſue,
And now the glitt'ring mountains riſe to view.
There ſacred to the radiant god of day,
Graze the fair herds, the flocks promiſcuous ſtray;
Then ſuddenly was heard along the main
To low the ox, to bleat the woolly train;

v. 300. *As from ſome rock that overhangs the flood,*
The ſilent fiſher ———]

Theſe tender and calm ſimilitudes have a peculiar beauty, when introduced to illuſtrate ſuch images of terrour as the poet here deſcribes: they ſet off each the other by an happy contraſt, and become both more ſtrong by oppoſition. Euſtathius remarks, that there is always a peculiar ſweetneſs in alluſions that are borrowed from calm life, as fiſhing, hunting, and rural affairs.

v. 314. *To Sol's bright iſle* ——— ———] This iſle is evidently Sicily; for he has already informed us, that theſe herds were on Trinacria, (ſo anciently called from the three promontories of Lilybæum, Pelorus, and Pachynus.)

Straight to my anxious thoughts the ſound convey'd
The words of Circe and the Theban ſhade;
Warn'd by their awful voice theſe ſhores to ſhun,
With cautious fears oppreſt, I thus begun.
O friends! oh ever exercis'd in care!
Hear heav'n's commands, and rev'rence what ye hear!
To fly theſe ſhores the preſcient Theban ſhade
And Circe warn! O be their voice obey'd:
Some mighty woe relentleſs heav'n forebodes:
Fly theſe dire regions, and revere the gods!
While yet I ſpoke, a ſudden ſorrow ran
Thro' ev'ry breaſt, and ſpread from man to man,
'Till wrathful thus Eurylochus began.
O cruel thou! ſome fury ſure has ſteel'd
That ſtubborn ſoul, by toil untaught to yield!
From ſleep debarr'd, we ſink from woes to woes;
And cruel, envieſt thou a ſhort repoſe?
Still muſt we reſtleſs rove, new ſeas explore,
The ſun deſcending, and ſo near the ſhore?
And lo! the night begins her gloomy reign,
And doubles all the terrours of the main.
Oft' in the dead of night loud winds ariſe,
Laſh the wild ſurge, and bluſter in the ſkies;
Oh ſhould the fierce ſouth-weſt his rage diſplay,
And toſs with riſing ſtorms the wat'ry way,
Tho' gods deſcend from heav'n's aerial plain
To lend us aid, the gods deſcend in vain:
Then while the night diſplays her awful ſhade,
Sweet time of ſlumber! be the night obey'd!
Haſte ye to land! and when the morning ray
Sheds her bright beams, purſue the deſtin'd way.

v. 332. *'Till wrathful thus Eurylochus began.*] Homer has found out a way to turn reproach into praiſe. What Eurylochus ſpeaks in his wrath againſt Ulyſſes as a fault, is really his glory; it ſhews him to be indefatigable, patient in adverſity, and obedient to the decrees of the gods. And what ſtill heightens the panegyric is, that it is ſpoken by an enemy, who muſt therefore be free from all ſuſpicion of flattery.

A ſudden joy in ev'ry boſom roſe;
So will'd ſome dæmon, miniſter of woes!
To whom with grief — O ſwift to be undone,
Conſtrain'd I act what wiſdom bids me ſhun.
But yonder herds, and yonder flocks forbear;
Atteſt the heav'ns, and call the gods to hear:
Content, an innocent repaſt diſplay,
By Circe giv'n, and fly the dang'rous prey.
Thus I: and while to ſhore the veſſel flies,
With hands uplifted they atteſt the ſkies:
Then where a fountain's gurgling waters play,
They ruſh to land, and end in feaſts the day:
They feed; they quaff; and now (their hunger fled)
Sigh for their friends devour'd, and mourn the dead.
Nor ceaſe the tears, 'till each in ſlumber ſhares
A ſweet forgetfulneſs of human cares.
Now far the night advanc'd her gloomy reign,
And ſetting ſtars roll'd down the azure plain:
When, at the voice of Jove, wild whirlwinds riſe,
And clouds and double darkneſs veil the ſkies;

v. 363. —— —— *And now (their hunger fled)*
Sigh for their friends devour'd, and mourn the dead.]

This conduct may ſeem ſomewhat extraordinary; the companions of Ulyſſes appear to have forgot their loſt friends, they entertain themſelves with a due refreſhment, and then find leiſure to mourn; whereas a true ſorrow would more probably have taken away all appetite. But the practice of Ulyſſes's friends is conſonant to the cuſtoms of antiquity: it was eſteemed a profanation and a piece of ingratitude to the gods, to mix ſorrow with their entertainments: the hours of repaſt were allotted to joy, and thankſgiving to heaven for the bounty it gave to man by ſuſtenance. Beſides, this practice bears a ſecret inſtruction, viz. that the principal care is owing to the living; and when that is over, the dead are not to be neglected. Æneas and his friends are drawn in the ſame attitude by Virgil:

" Poſtquam exempta fames epulis, menſæque remotæ,
" Amiſſos longo ſocios ſermone requirunt;
" Præcipuè pius Æneas, nunc acris Oronti,
" Nunc Amyci caſum gemit, &c."

The moon, the ſtars, the bright ætherial hoſt
Seem as extinct, and all their ſplendours loſt;
The furious tempeſt roars with dreadful ſound:
Air thunders, rolls the ocean, groans the ground.
All night it rag'd; when morning roſe, to land
We haul'd our bark, and moor'd it on the ſtrand,
Where in a beauteous grotto's cool receſs
Dance the green Nereids of the neighb'ring ſeas.
There while the wild winds whiſtled o'er the main,
Thus careful I addreſt the liſt'ning train.
O friends be wiſe! nor dare the flocks deſtroy
Of theſe fair paſtures: if ye touch, ye die.
Warn'd by the high command of heav'n, be aw'd;
Holy the flocks, and dreadful is the god!
That god who ſpreads the radiant beams of light,
And views wide earth and heav'n's unmeaſur'd height.
And now the moon had run her monthly round,
The ſouth-eaſt bluſt'ring with a dreadful ſound;
Unhurt the beeves, untouch'd the woolly train
Low thro' the grove, or range the flow'ry plain:
Then fail'd our food; then fiſh we make our prey,
Or fowl that ſcreaming haunt the wat'ry way.
'Till now from ſea or flood no ſuccour found,
Famine and meagre want beſieg'd us round.
Penſive and pale from grove to grove I ſtray'd,
From the loud ſtorms to find a ſilvan ſhade;

v. 395. *Penſive and pale from grove to grove I ſtray'd.*] It was neceſſary (remarks Euſtathius) for the poet to invent ſome pretext to remove Ulyſſes: if he had been preſent, his companions dared not to have diſobeyed him openly; or if they had, it would have ſhewed a want of authority, which would have been a diſparagement to that hero. Now what pretext could be more rational than to ſuppoſe him withdrawn to offer up his devotions to the gods? His affairs are brought to the utmoſt extremity, his companions murmur, and hunger oppreſſes. The poet therefore, to bring about the crime of theſe offenders by probable methods, repreſents Ulyſſes retiring to ſupplicate the gods; a conduct which they ought to have imitated: beſides, there is a poetical juſtice obſerved in the whole relation, and

There o'er my hands the living wave I pour;
And heav'n and heav'n's immortal thrones adore,
To calm the roarings of the ſtormy main,
And grant me peaceful to my realms again.
Then o'er my eyes the gods ſoft ſlumber ſhed,
While thus Eurylochus ariſing ſaid.

O friends, a thouſand ways frail mortals lead
To the cold tomb, and dreadful all to tread;
But dreadful moſt, when by a ſlow decay
Pale hunger waſtes the manly ſtrength away.
Why ceaſe ye then t'implore the pow'rs above,
And offer hecatombs to thund'ring Jove?
Why ſeize ye not yon' beeves, and fleecy prey?
Ariſe unanimous; ariſe and ſlay!
And if the gods ordain a ſafe return,
To Phœbus ſhrines ſhall riſe, and altars burn.
But ſhould the pow'rs that o'er mankind preſide,
Decree to plunge us in the whelming tide,
Better to ruſh at once to ſhades below,
Than linger life away, and nouriſh woe!

by the piety of Ulyſſes, and the guilt of his companions, we acknowledge the equity when we ſee them periſh, and Ulyſſes preſerved from all his dangers.

v. 412. *To Phœbus ſhrines ſhall riſe,*——] Eurylochus put on an air of piety to perſuade his companions to commit ſacrilege: "Let us ſacrifice, ſays he, to the gods:" as if obedience were not better than ſacrifice. Homer underſtood the nature of man, which is ſtudious to find excuſes to juſtify our crimes; and we often offend, merely through hopes of a pardon. Dacier.

The word in the original is ἀγάλματα, which does not ſignify ſtatues, but ornaments, ἀναθήματα, hung up, or repoſited in the temples; ſuch as

——Ἀγλαΐης ἕνεκα κομόωσιν ἄνακτες,

or as it is expreſſed in the Iliad,

——Βασιλῆι κεῖται ἄγαλμα.

Heſychius interprets ἄγαλμα to be, πᾶν ἐφ' ᾧ τις ἀγάλλεται, ὅπ ὡς Συνηθεία ζόανον; that is, ἄγαλμα ſignifies every ornament with which a perſon is delighted or adorned; not a ſtatue, as it is underſtood by the generality. Dacier. Euſtathius.

Thus he: the beeves around ſecurely ſtray,
When ſwift to ruin they invade the prey;
They ſeize, they kill!—but for the rite divine,
The barley fail'd, and for libations, wine.
Swift from the oak they ſtrip the ſhady pride;
And verdant leaves the flow'ry cake ſupply'd.
With pray'er they now addreſs th' ætherial train,
Slay the ſelected beeves, and flay the ſlain:
The thighs, with fat involv'd, divide with art,
Strew'd o'er with morſels cut from ev'ry part.
Water, inſtead of wine, is brought in urns,
And pour'd profanely as the victim burns.
The thighs thus offer'd, and the entrails dreſt,
They roaſt the fragments, and prepare the feaſt.
'Twas then ſoft ſlumber fled my troubled brain
Back to the bark I ſpeed along the main.
When lo! an odour from the feaſt exhales,
Spreads o'er the coaſt, and ſcents the tainted gales;
A chilly fear congeal'd my vital blood,
And thus obteſting heav'n I mourn'd aloud.
O ſire of men and gods, immortal Jove!
Oh all ye bliſsful pow'rs that reign above!
Why were my cares beguil'd in ſhort repoſe?
O fatal ſlumber, paid with laſting woes!
A deed ſo dreadful all the gods alarms,
Vengeance is on the wing, and heav'n in arms!
Meantime Lampetie mounts the aerial way,
And kindles into rage the god of day:
Vengeance ye pow'rs, (he cries) and thou whoſe hand
Aims the red bolt, and hurls the writhen brand!
Slain are thoſe herds which I with pride ſurvey,
When thro' the ports of heav'n I pour the day,
Or deep in ocean plunge the burning ray.
Vengeance, ye gods! or I the ſkies forego,
And bear the lamp of heav'n to ſhades below.

v. 451. *And bear the lamp of heav'n to ſhades below*] This is a very bold fiction; for how can the the ſun be imagined to illuminate

To whom the thund'ring pow'r: O ſource of day!
Whoſe radiant lamp adorns the azure way,
Still may thy beams thro' heav'n's bright portals riſe,
The joy of earth, and glory of the ſkies;
Lo! my red arm I bear, my thunders guide,
To daſh th' offenders in the whelming tide.
To fair Calypſo from the bright abodes,
Hermes convey'd theſe councils of the gods.

the regions of the dead; that is, to ſhine within the earth, for, there the realm of Pluto is placed by Homer? I am perſuaded the meaning is only that he would no more riſe, but leave the earth and heavens in perpetual darkneſs. Erebus is placed in the weſt, where the ſun ſets, and conſequently when he diſappears, he may be ſaid to be ſunk into the realms of darkneſs, or Erebus.

Perhaps the whole fiction might be founded really upon the obſervation of ſome unuſual darkneſs of the ſun, either from a total eclipſe or other cauſes, which happened at a time when ſome remarkable crime was committed, and gave the poets liberty to feign that the ſun withdrew his light from the view of it. Thus at the death of Cæſar the globe of the ſun was obſcured, or gave but a weak light, (ſays Plutarch) a whole year: and Pliny, lib. ii. 80. "Fiunt prodigioſi & longiores ſolis defectus, totius pené anni pallore continuo." This Virgil directly applies to the horrour the ſun conceived at the death of Cæſar, Georg. i.

"Ille etiam extincto miſeratus Cæſare Romam,
"Cum caput obſcurâ nitidum ferrugine texit,
"Impiaque æternam timuerunt ſecula noctem."

And if Virgil might ſay that the ſun withdrew his beams at the impiety of the Romans, why may not Homer ſay the ſame, concerning the crime of the companions of Ulyſſes? Dacier imagines that Homer had heard of the ſun's ſtanding ſtill at the voice of Joſhua; for if (ſays ſhe) he could ſtand ſtill in the upper region, why may not he do the ſame in the contrary hemiſphere, that is, in the language of Homer, "bear his lamps to ſhades below?" But this ſeems to be ſpoken without any foundation, there being no occaſion to have recourſe to that miraculous event for a ſolution.

v. 458. *To fair Calypſo from the bright abodes,*
Hermes convey'd theſe councils of the gods.]

Theſe lines are inſerted (as Euſtathius obſerves) ſolely to reconcile the ſtory to credibility; for how was it poſſible for Ulyſſes to arrive at the knowledge of what was done in heaven, without a diſcovery made by ſome of the deities? The perſons by whom theſe

Meantime from man to man my tongue exclaims,
My wrath is kindled, and my ſoul in flames.
In vain! I view perform'd the direful deed,
Beeves, ſlain by heaps, along the ocean bleed.
Now heav'n gave ſigns of wrath, along the ground
Crept the raw hides, and with a bellowing ſound
Roar'd the dead limbs; the burning entrails groan'd.

diſcourſes of the gods are diſcovered are happily choſen; Mercury was the meſſenger of heaven, and it is this god who deſcends to Calypſo in the fifth book of the Odyſſey: ſo that there was a correſpondence between Calypſo and Mercury; and therefore he is a proper perſon to make this diſcovery to that goddeſs, and ſhe, out of affection to Ulyſſes.

v. 464. *Now heav'n gave ſigns of wrath; along the ground*
Crept the raw hides ——]

This paſſage (ſays Euſtathius) gave an occaſion of laughter to men diſpoſed to be merry, Λάβας γηλοιάσμῶ δέδωκε τοῖς παιζειν ἐθέλυσι. He adds, that the terrours of a guilty conſcience drove the companions of Ulyſſes into theſe imaginations: guilt is able to create a phantom in a moment, ſo that theſe appearances were nothing but the illuſions of a diſturbed imagination. He cites a paſſage from the Calliope of Herodotus to vindicate Homer: Artaycte, a Perſian general, had plundered a temple in which was the tomb of Proteſilaus, where great riches were depoſited; afterwards he was beſieged in Seſtus, and taken priſoner: one day, one of his guards was boiling ſalted fiſhes (τάριχοι) and they leaped, and moved as if they had been alive, and newly taken out of the water: divers perſons crouded about the place, and wondered at the miracle; when Artaycte ſaid, "Friends, you are not at all concerned in this miracle: Pro-" teſilaus, though dead, admoniſhes me by this ſign, that the gods " have given him power to revenge the injury I offered to his monu-" ment in Eleus." But this is juſtifying one fable by another; and this looks alſo like the effects of a guilty conſcience.

This is not among the paſſages condemned by Longinus; and indeed it was no way blameable, if we conſider the times when it was ſpoken, and the perſons to whom it is related: I mean Phæacians, who were delighted with ſuch wonders. What was ſaid injudiciouſly by a great writer, may very properly be applied to theſe people, "Credo, quia impoſſibile eſt." But we need not have recourſe to their credulity for a vindication of this ſtory: Homer has given us an account of all the abſtruſe arts, ſuch as necromancy, witchcraft, and natural portents; here he relates a prodigy, the belief of which univerſally prevailed among the antients: let

Six guilty days my wretched mates employ
In impious feaſting, and unhallow'd joy;
The ſeventh aroſe, and now the ſire of gods
Rein'd the rough ſtorms, and calm'd the toſſing floods:
With ſpeed the bark we climb; the ſpacious ſails
Loos'd from the yards invite th' impelling gales.
Paſt ſight of ſhore, along the ſurge we bound,
And all above is ſky, and ocean all around!
When lo! a murky cloud the thund'rer forms
Full o'er our heads, and blackens heav'n with ſtorms.
Night dwells o'er all the deep: and now out flies
The gloomy weſt, and whiſtles in the ſkies.

any one read Livy, and he will find innumerable inſtances of prodigies, equally incredible as this, which were related by the wiſe, and believed at leaſt by the vulgar. Thus we read of ſpeaking oxen, the ſweating of the ſtatues of the gods, in the beſt Roman hiſtories. If ſuch wonders might have a place in hiſtory, they may certainly be allowed room in poetry, whoſe province is fable: it ſignifies nothing whether a ſtory be true or falſe, provided it be eſtabliſhed by common belief, or common fame; this is a ſufficient foundation for poetry. Virgil, Georg. i. 478.

" ——— Pecudeſque locutæ,
" Infandum! ſiſtunt amnes, &c."

The days of wonder are now over, and therefore a poet would be blameable to make uſe of ſuch impoſſibilities in theſe ages: they are now almoſt univerſally diſbelieved, and therefore would not be approved as bold fictions, but exploded as wild extravagancies.

v. 477. ——— *And now out flies*
The gloomy weſt, &c.]

Longinus, while he condemns the Odyſſey as wanting fire, through the decay of Homer's fancy, excepts the deſcriptions of the tempeſts, which he allows to be painted with the boldeſt and ſtrongeſt ſtrokes of poetry. Let any perſon read that paſſage in the fifth book, and he will be convinced of the fire of Homer's fancy.

Ὡς εἰπὼν ζόφεεν νεφέλας, ἐτάραξε δὲ πόντον,
Χερσὶ τριαίνην ἔλων, πάσας δ' ὀρόθυνεν ἀέλλας
Παντοίων ἀνέμων, ζόφῳ δὲ νεφέεσσι κάλυψε
Γαῖαν ὁμοῦ καὶ πόντον· ὀρώρει δ' ἐξανόθεν νύξ.

The two laſt lines are here repeated; and Scaliger, a ſecond Zoilus of Homer, allows them to be " omnia pulchra, plena, gravia,

The mountain-billows roar! the furious blaſt
Howls o'er the ſhroud, and rends it from the maſt:
The maſt gives way, and crackling as it bends,
Tears up the deck; then all at once deſcends:
The pilot by the tumbling ruin ſlain,
Daſh'd from the helm, falls headlong in the main.

p. 469. There is a ſtorm in the very words, and the horrours of it are viſible in the verſes.

Virgil was maſter of too much judgment, not to embelliſh his Æneid with this deſcription.

" Incubere mari, totumque a ſedibus imis
" Unà Euruſque Notuſque ruunt, creberque procellis
" Africus, & vaſtos volvunt ad littora fluctus,
" Eripiunt ſubito nubes cœlumque diemque
" Teucrorum ex oculis: ponto nox incubat atra."

Theſe are almoſt literally tranſlated from the abovementioned verſes of Homer, and theſe following.

Σὺν δ' Εὖρός τε Νότος τ' ἔπεσε, Ζέφυρός τε δυσαὴς
Καὶ Βορέης αἰθρηγενέτης, μέγα κῦμα κυλίνδων.

Scaliger calls the verſes of Homer, "divina oratio," but prefers thoſe of Virgil. " Totumque a ſedibus imis," is ſtronger than ἐτάραξε πόντον, &c. and Αἰθρηγενέτης is an ill choſen epithet, to be uſed to deſcribe a ſtorm, for it carries an image of ſerenity. But that is to be underſtood of the general nature of that wind: as a river may be ſaid to be gentle, though capable to be ſwelled into a flood. But I leave the preference to the reader's judgment.

v. 483. *The pilot by the tumbling ruin ſlain.*] There is a great ſimilitude between this paſſage and ſome verſes in Virgil, in which, as Scaliger judges, and perhaps with reaſon, the preference is to be given to the Roman poet. " Tenuiſſimâ, ſays that critic, & leviſſimâ utitur narratione Homerus.

Πλῆξε κυβερνήτεω κεφαλὴν, ζὺν δ' ὀχέα ἄραξε
Πάντ' ἄμυδις κεφαλῆς, ὃ δ' ἀρνευτῆρι ἐοικὼς
Κάππεσε.

And again,

——πεσον δ' ἐκ νηὸς ἑταῖροι.
Οἱ δὲ κορώνησιν ἴκελοι περὶ νῆα μέλαιναν
Κύμασιν ἐμφορέονθο.

" ——Ingens a vertice Pontus
" In puppim ferit; excutitur, pronuſque magiſter
" Volvitur in caput."

Then Jove in anger bids his thunders roll,
And forky lightnings flash from pole to pole;
Fierce at our heads his deadly bolt he aims,
Red with uncommon wrath, and wrapt in flames:
Full on the bark it fell; now high, now low,
Toss'd and retoss'd, it reel'd beneath the blow;
At once into the main the crew it shook:
Sulphureous odours rose, and smould'ring smoke.
Like fowl that haunt the floods, they sink, they rise,
Now lost, now seen, with shrieks and dreadful cries;
And strive to gain the bark; but Jove denies.
Firm at the helm I stand, when fierce the main
Rush'd with dire noise, and dash'd the sides in twain;
Again impetuous drove the furious blast,
Snapt the strong helm, and bore to sea the mast.
Firm to the mast with cords the helm I bind,
And ride aloft, to providence resign'd,
Thro' tumbling billows, and a war of wind.
Now sunk the west, and now a southern breeze
More dreadful than the tempest, lash'd the seas;
For on the rocks it bore where Scylla raves,
And dire Charybdis rolls her thund'ring waves.
All night I drove; and at the dawn of day,
Fast by the rocks beheld the desp'rate way:
Just when the sea within her gulfs subsides,
And in the roaring whirlpools rush the tides.

"——Ast illam ter fluctus ibidem
"Torquet agens circum, & rapidus vorat æquore vortex
"Apparent rari nantes in gurgite vasto."

There is certainly better versification in these lines of Virgil, than in those of Homer: there is better colouring, and they set the thing they describe full before our eyes. Virgil has omitted the two short similitudes of the diver, and the sea-mews, despairing perhaps to make them shine in the Roman language. There is a third simile in Homer of the bat or bird of night Νύκτερις, which is introduced to represent Ulysses clinging round the fig-tree. It is true the whole three are taken from low subjects, but they very well paint the thing they were intended to illustrate.

Swift from the float I vaulted with a bound,
The lofty fig-tree ſeiz'd, and clung around :
So to the beam the bat tenacious clings,
And pendent round it claſps his leathern wings.
High in the air the tree its boughs diſplay'd,
And o'er the dungeon caſt a dreadful ſhade,
All unſuſtain'd between the wave and ſky,
Beneath my feet the whirling billows fly.
What-time the judge forſakes the noiſy bar
To take repaſt, and ſtills the wordy war ;

v. 519. *What time the judge forſakes the noiſy bar*
To take repaſt ———]

This paſſage has been egregiouſly miſunderſtood by Monſieur Perrault. Ulyſſes being carried (ſays that author) on his maſt towards Charybdis, leaps from it, and clings like a bat round a fig-tree, waiting till the return of the maſt from the gulfs of it ; and adds, that when he ſaw it, he was as glad as a judge when he riſes from his ſeat to go to dinner, after having tried ſeveral cauſes. But Boileau fully vindicates Homer in his reflections on Longinus : before the uſe of dials or clocks the antients diſtinguiſhed the day by ſome remarkable offices or ſtated employments : as from the dining of the labourer.

——What time in ſome ſequeſter'd vale
The weary woodman ſpreads his ſparing meal.

Iliad xi. ver. 119. See the annotations; ſo here from the riſing of the judges : and both denote the mid-day, or noon-tide hour. Thus it is uſed by Hippocrates, who ſpeaking of a perſon wounded with a javelin in the liver, ſays he died πρὶν ἀγορὴν λυθῆναι, a little before the breaking up of the aſſembly, or before the judge riſes from his tribunal : or as ſome underſtand it, a little before the finiſhing of the market : there is a parallel expreſſion in Xenophon, ἢ ἤδη τε ἀμφὶ ἀγορὰν πλήθουσαν. This riſing of the judge Perrault miſtakes for a compariſon, to expreſs the joy which Ulyſſes conceived at the ſight of the return of his maſt ; than which nothing can be more diſtant from Homer's ſentiment.

From this deſcription we may preciſely learn the time that paſſed while Ulyſſes clung round the fig-tree.

——At the dawn of day,
Faſt by the rocks I plough'd the deſp'rate way.

So that at morning he leaped from his float, and about noon recovered it : now Euſtathius affirms, that in the ſpace of twenty-

Charybdis rumbling from her inmoſt caves,
The maſt refunded on her refluent waves.
Swift from the tree, the floating maſt to gain,
Sudden I dropp'd amidſt the flaſhing main;
Once more undaunted on the ruin rode,
And oar'd with lab'ring arms along the flood,
Unſeen I paſs'd by Scylla's dire abodes:
So Jove decreed, (dread ſire of men and gods)
Then nine long days I plough'd the calmer ſeas
Heav'd by the ſurge, and wafted by the breeze.
Weary and wet th' Ogygian ſhores I gain,
When the tenth ſun deſcended to the main.

four hours there are three tides, and dividing that time into three parts, Ulyſſes will appear to have remained upon the rock eight hours. The exact time when the judge roſe from his tribunal is not apparent: Boileau ſuppoſes it to be about three o' clock in the afternoon, Dacier about two; but the time was certain among the antients, and is only dubious to us, as we are ignorant of the hour of the day when the judge entered his tribunal, and when he left it.

v. 532. *When the tenth ſun deſcended to the main.*] This account is very extraordinary. Ulyſſes continued upon the maſt ten days, and conſequently ten days without any nouriſhment. Longinus brings this paſſage as an inſtance of the decay of Homer's genius, and his lanching out into extravagant fables. I wonder Euſtathius ſhould be ſilent about this objection; but Dacier endeavours to vindicate Homer, from a ſimilar place in the Acts of the Apoſtles, chap. xxvii. ver. 33. where St. Paul ſays to the ſailors, "This is the fourteenth "day that ye have tarried, and continued faſting, having taken "nothing." Now if the ſailors in the acts could faſt fourteen days, why may not Ulyſſes faſt ten? But this place by no means comes up to the point. The words are τεσσαρεσκαιδεκάτην σήμερον ἡμέραν προσδοκῶντες, that is, expecting the fourteenth day, (which is to-day) you continue without eating; ſo the meaning is, they had taken no food all that day; the danger was ſo great that they had no leiſure to think upon hunger. This is the literal conſtruction of the words, and implies that out of expectation of the fourteenth day, (which they looked upon as a critical time when the danger would be at the higheſt) they had forgot to take their uſual repaſt; and not, that they had faſted fourteen days. But if any perſon thinks that the faſting is to be applied to the whole fourteen days, it muſt be in that latitude wherein interpreters expound Heſiod.

There in Calypſo's ever-fragrant bow'rs
Refreſh'd I lay, and joy beguil'd the hours.
My following fates to thee, oh king, are known,
And the bright partner of thy royal throne.
Enough: in miſery can words avail?
And what ſo tedious as a twice-told tale?

——— ἀδὲ τε σῖτον
Ἤσθιον ———

which ſignifies not that they eat no meat at all, but that they had not leiſure through their danger to obſerve the uſual and ſtated hours of repaſt: they eat in their arms, with their hands fouled with blood. But I take the former ſenſe to be the better. Beſides, it is impoſſible to make this place of any ſervice to Homer; for if theſe men continued ſo long faſting, it was a miraculous faſt; and how can this be applied to Ulyſſes, who is not imagined to owe his power of faſting to any ſupernatural aſſiſtance? But it is almoſt a demonſtration that the ſailors in the Acts eat during the tempeſt: why ſhould they abſtain? It was not for want of food; for at St. Paul's injunction they take ſome ſuſtenance: now it is abſurd to imagine a miracle to be performed, when common and eaſy means were at hand to make ſuch a ſupernatural act unneceſſary. If they had been without food, then indeed a miracle might have been ſuppoſed to ſupply it. If they had died through faſting, when meat was at hand, they would have been guilty of ſtarving themſelves. If therefore we ſuppoſe a miracle, we muſt ſuppoſe it to be wrought, to prevent men from being guilty of wilful ſelf-murder, which is an abſurdity.

Beſides, the word ἄσιτος is uſed to denote a perſon who takes no food for the ſpace of one day only, as μονόσιτος ſignifies a perſon who eats but one meal in the compaſs of one day; this therefore is an evidence, that the ſailors in the Acts had not been without ſuſtenance fourteen days.

In ſhort, I am not in the number of thoſe who think Homer has no faults; and unleſs we imagine Ulyſſes to have faſted ten days by the aſſiſtance of the gods, this paſſage muſt be allowed to be extravagant: it is true, Homer ſays, the gods guided him to the Ogygian ſhores; but he ſays not a word to ſoften the incredibility of the faſting of Ulyſſes, through an aſſiſtance of the gods. I am therefore inclined to ſubſcribe to the opinion of Longinus, that this relation is faulty; but ſay with Horace,

" ——— Non ego paucis
" Offendar maculis, quas aut incuria fudit,
" Aut humana parum cavit natura."

THE

ODYSSEY.

BOOK XIII.

THE ARGUMENT.

The arrival of Ulyſſes in Ithaca.

Ulyſſes takes his leave of Alcinous and Arete, and embarks in the evening. Next morning the ſhip arrives at Ithaca; where the ſailors, as Ulyſſes is yet ſleeping, lay him on the ſhore with all his treaſures. On their return, Neptune changes their ſhip into a rock. In the mean-time Ulyſſes awaking, knows not his native Ithaca, by reaſon of a miſt which Pallas had caſt round him. He breaks out into loud lamentations; 'till the goddeſs appearing to him in the form of a ſhepherd, diſcovers the country to him, and points out the particular places. He then tells a feigned ſtory of his adventures, upon which ſhe manifeſts herſelf, and they conſult together of the meaſures to be taken to deſtroy the ſuitors. To conceal his return, and diſguiſe his perſon the more effectually, ſhe changes him into the figure of an old beggar.

HE ceas'd; but left ſo pleaſing on their ear
His voice, that liſt'ning ſtill they ſeem'd to hear.
A pauſe of ſilence huſh'd the ſhady rooms:
The grateful conf'rence then the king reſumes.

v. 3. —— *The ſhady rooms.*] The epithet in the original is σκιόεντα, or, "gloomy:" it is here uſed with a peculiar propriety, to keep in the reader's mind the exact time when Ulyſſes made his narration to the Phæacians, namely, in the evening, of the thirty-third day: we may likewiſe gather from this diſtinction of times, the exact ſtay of Ulyſſes among the Phæacians; he was thrown up-

Whatever toils the great Ulyſſes paſt,
Beneath this happy roof they end at laſt;
No longer now from ſhore to ſhore to roam,
Smooth ſeas, and gentle winds, invite him home.
But hear me, princes! whom theſe walls incloſe,
For whom my chanter ſings, and goblet flows
With wine unmixt, (an honour due to age,
To chear the grave, and warm the poet's rage)
Tho' labour'd gold and many a dazzling veſt
Lie heap'd already for our god-like gueſt;
Without new treaſures let him not remove,
Large, and expreſſive of the public love:
Each peer a tripod, each a vaſe beſtow,
A gen'ral tribute, which the ſtate ſhall owe.
This ſentence pleas'd: then all their ſteps addreſt
To ſep'rate manſions, and retir'd to reſt.
Now did the roſy-finger'd morn ariſe,
And ſhed her ſacred light along the ſkies.
Down to the haven and the ſhips in haſte
They bore the treaſures, and in ſafety plac'd.
The king himſelf the vaſes rang'd with care:
Then bade his followers to the feaſt repair.

on their ſhores on the thirty-firſt day in the evening, and lands about day break on the thirty-fifth day in his own country; ſo that he ſtayed three nights only with Alcinous, one night being ſpent in his voyage to Ithaca from Phæacia.

v. 10. *For whom my chanter ſings, and goblet flows*
With wine unmixt, &c.]

Homer calls the wine γερέσιον, or wine drank at the entertainment of elders, γερόντων, or men of diſtinction, ſays Euſtathius; by the bard, he means Demodocus.

The ſame critics further remarks, that Homer judiciouſly ſhortens every circumſtance before he comes to the diſmiſſion of Ulyſſes: thus he omits the deſcription of the ſacrifice, and the ſubject of the ſong of Demodocus; theſe are circumſtances that at beſt would be but uſeleſs ornaments, and ill agree with the impatience of Ulyſſes to begin his voyage toward his country. Theſe therefore the poet briefly diſpatches.

A victim ox beneath the ſacred hand
Of great Alcinous falls, and ſtains the ſand.
To Jove th' eternal, (pow'r above all pow'rs!
Who wings the winds, and darkens heav'n with ſhow'rs)
The flames aſcend: 'till evening they prolong
The rites, more ſacred made by heav'nly ſong:
For in the midſt, with public honours grac'd,
Thy lyre divine, Demodocus! was plac'd,
All, but Ulyſſes, hear'd with fix'd delight:
He ſat, and ey'd the ſun, and wiſh'd the night;
Slow ſeem'd the ſun to move, the hours to roll,
His native home deep imag'd in his ſoul.
As the tir'd ploughman ſpent with ſtubborn toil,
Whoſe oxen long have torn the furrow'd ſoil,
Sees with delight the ſun's declining ray,
When home with feeble knees, he bends his way
To late repaſt, (the day's hard labour done:)
So to Ulyſſes welcome ſet the ſun,

v. 39. *As the tir'd ploughman*, &c.] The ſimile which Homer chuſes is drawn from low life, but very happily ſets off the impatience of Ulyſſes: it is familiar, but expreſſive. Horace was not of the judgment of thoſe who thought it mean, for he uſes it in his epiſtles.

" ——————dieſque
" Longa videtur opus debentibus: ut piger annus
" Pupillis, quos dura premit cuſtodia matrum;
" Sic mihi tarda fluunt, ingrataque tempora, quæ ſpem
" Conſiliumque morantur," &c.

It was very neceſſary to dwell upon this impatience of Ulyſſes to return: it would have been abſurd to have repreſented him cool, or even moderately warm upon this occaſion; he had refuſed immortality through the love of his country; it is now in his power to return to it; he ought therefore conſiſtently with his former character to be drawn with the utmoſt earneſtneſs of the ſoul, and every moment muſt appear tedious that keeps him from it; it ſhews therefore the judgment of Homer to deſcribe him in this manner, and not to paſs it over curſorily, but force it upon the notice of the reader, by inſiſting upon it ſomewhat largely, and illuſtrating it by a proper ſimilitude, to fix it more ſtrongly upon our memory.

Then inſtant, to Alcinous and the reſt,
(The Scherian ſtates) he turn'd, and thus addreſt.
O thou, the firſt in merit and command!
And you the peers and princes of the land!
May ev'ry joy be yours! nor this the leaſt,
When due libation ſhall have crown'd the feaſt,
Safe to my home to ſend your happy gueſt.
Compleat are now the bounties you have giv'n,
Be all thoſe bounties but confirm'd by heav'n!
So may I find, when all my wand'rings ceaſe,
My conſort blameleſs, and my friends in peace.
On you be ev'ry bliſs; and ev'ry day,
In home-felt joys delighted, roll away;
Yourſelves, your wives, your long deſcending race,
May ev'ry god enrich with ev'ry grace!
Sure fixt on virtue may your nation ſtand,
And public evil never touch the land!
His words well weigh'd, the gen'ral voice approv'd
Benign, and inſtant his diſmiſſion mov'd.
The monarch to Pontonous gave the ſign,
To fill the goblet high with roſy wine:
Great Jove the father, firſt (he cry'd) implore;
Then ſend the ſtranger to his native ſhore.
The luſcious wine th' obedient herald brought;
Around the manſion flow'd the purple draught:
Each from his ſeat to each immortal pours,
Whom glory circles in th' Olympian bow'rs.
Ulyſſes ſole with air majeſtic ſtands,
The bowl preſenting to Arete's hands;

v. 53. *Be all thoſe bounties but confirm'd by heav'n!*] This is a pious and inſtructive ſentence, and teaches, that though riches were heaped upon us with the greateſt abundance and ſuperfluity; yet unleſs heaven adds its benediction, they will prove but at beſt a burden and calamity.

v. 73. *The bowl preſenting to Arete's hands;*
Then thus ——————]

It may be aſked why Ulyſſes addreſſes his words to the queen rather

Then thus: O queen farewel! be ſtill poſſeſt
Of dear remembrance, bleſſing ſtill and bleſt!
'Till age and death ſhall gently call thee hence,
(Sure fate of ev'ry mortal excellence!)
Farewel! and joys ſucceſſive ever ſpring
To thee, to thine, the people, and the king!
Thus he; then parting prints the ſandy ſhore
To the fair port: a herald march'd before,
Sent by Alcinous: of Arete's train
Three choſen maids attend him to the main;
This does a tunic and white veſt convey,
A various caſket that, of rich inlay,
And bread and wine the third. The chearful mates
Safe in the hollow poop diſpoſe the cates:
Upon the deck, ſoft painted robes they ſpread,
With linen cover'd, for the hero's bed.
He climb'd the lofty ſtern; then gently preſt
The ſwelling couch, and lay compos'd to reſt.
Now plac'd in order, the Phæacian train
Their cables looſe, and lanch into the main:
At once they bend, and ſtrike their equal oars,
And leave the ſinking hills, and leſſ'ning ſhores.
While on the deck the chief in ſilence lies,
And pleaſing ſlumbers ſteal upon his eyes.
As fiery courſers in the rapid race
Urg'd by fierce drivers thro' the duſty ſpace,

than the king: the reaſon is, becauſe ſhe was his patroneſs, and had firſt received him with hoſpitality, as appears from the ſeventh book of the Odyſſey.

Ulyſſes makes a libation to the gods, and preſents the bowl to the queen: this was the pious practice of antiquity upon all ſolemn occaſions: Ulyſſes here does it, becauſe he is to undertake a voyage, and it implies a prayer for the proſperity of it. The reaſon why he preſents the bowl to the queen is, that ſhe may firſt drink out of it, for ſo προπίνειν properly and originally ſignifies, τὸ πρὸ ἑαυτῦ διδόναι τινὶ πίνειν, ſays Euſtathius. "Propino" is uſed differently by the Romans

v. 98. *As fiery courſers in the rapid race*
Toſs their high heads, &c.]

The poet introduces two ſimilitudes to repreſent the ſailing of the

Toſs their high heads, and ſcour along the plain;
So mounts the bounding veſſel o'er the main.
Back to the ſtern the parted billows flow,
And the black ocean foams and roars below.
Thus with ſpread ſails the winged galley flies;
Leſs ſwift an eagle cuts the liquid ſkies;
Divine Ulyſſes was her ſacred load,
A man, in wiſdom equal to a God!

Phæacian veſſel: the former deſcribes the motion of it, as it bounds and riſes over the waves, like horſes toſſing their heads in a race; and alſo the ſteadineſs of it, in that it ſails with as much firmneſs over the billows, as horſes tread upon the ground. The latter compariſon is ſolely to ſhew the ſwiftneſs of the veſſel.

The word in the original is τελάοροι; an inſtance, that four horſes were ſometimes joined to the chariot. Virgil has borrowed this compariſon, Æn. v.

"Non tam præcipites bijugo certamine campum
"Corripuere, ruuntque effuſi carcere currus,
"Nec ſic immiſſis aurigæ undantia lora
"Concuſſere jugis, pronique in verbera pendent."

It muſt be allowed that nothing was ever more happily executed than this deſcription, and the copy far exceeds the original. Macrobius, Saturnal. lib. v. gives this as his opinion, and his reaſons for it. The Greek poet (ſays that author) paints only the ſwiftneſs of the horſes when ſcourged by the driver; Virgil adds, the ruſhing of the chariot, the fields as it were devoured by the rapidity of the horſes; we ſee the throwing up of the reins, in "undantia lora;" and the attiude of the driver, leaning forward in the act of laſhing of the horſes, in the words, "Pronique in verbera pendent." It is true, nothing could be added more elegantly than the ὑψοῦ' ἀειρόμενοι, in Homer: it paints at once the ſwiftneſs of the race, and the riſing poſture of the horſes in the act of running; but Virgil is more copious, and has omitted no circumſtance, and ſet the whole race fully before our eyes; we may add, that the verſification is as beautiful as the deſcription compleat; every ear muſt be ſenſible of it.

I will only further obſerve the judgment of Homer in ſpeaking of every perſon in his particular character. When a vain-glorious Phæacian deſcribed the ſailing of his own veſſels, they were as ſwift as thought, and endued with reaſon; when Homer ſpeaks in his own perſon to his readers, they are ſaid only to be as ſwift as hawks or horſes: Homer ſpeaks like a poet, with ſome degree of amplification, but not with ſo much hyperbole as Alcinous. No people ſpeak ſo fondly as ſailors of their own ſhips to this day, and particularly are ſtill apt to talk of them as of living creatures.

Much danger, long and mighty toils he bore,
In ſtorms by ſea, and combats on the ſhore;
All which ſoft ſleep now baniſh'd from his breaſt,
Wrapt in a pleaſing, deep, and death-like reſt.
But when the morning ſtar with early ray
Flam'd in the front of heav'n, and promis'd day;
Like diſtant clouds the mariner deſcries
Fair Ithaca's emerging hills ariſe.
Far from the town a ſpacious port appears,
Sacred to Phorcys' pow'r, whoſe name it bears:
Two craggy rocks projecting to the main,
The roaring wind's tempeſtuous rage reſtrain,
Within, the waves in ſofter murmurs glide,
And ſhips ſecure without their halſers ride.

v. 112. *But when the morning ſtar with early ray*
Flam'd in the front of heav'n ——]

From this paſſage we may gather, that Ithaca is diſtant from Corcyra or Phæacia no farther than a veſſel ſails in the compaſs of one night; and this agrees with the real diſtance between thoſe iſlands; an inſtance that Homer was well acquainted with geography: this is the morning of the thirty-fifth day.

v. 116. —— *A ſpacious port appears,*
Sacred to Phorcys' ——]

Phorcys was the ſon of Pontus, and Terra, according to Heſiod's genealogy of the gods: this haven is ſaid to be ſacred to that deity, becauſe he had a temple near it, from whence it received its appellation.

The whole voyage of Ulyſſes to his country, and indeed the whole Odyſſey, has been turned into allegory; which I will lay before the reader as an inſtance of a trifling induſtry and ſtrong imagination. Ulyſſes is in ſearch of true felicity, the Ithaca and Penelope of Homer: he runs through many difficulties and dangers; this ſhews that happineſs is not to be attained without labour and afflictions. He has ſeveral companions, who periſh by their vices, and he alone eſcapes by the aſſiſtance of the Phæacians, and is tranſported in his ſleep to his country; that is, the Phæacians, whoſe name implies blackneſs, φαίοι, are the mourners at his death, and attend him to his grave: the ſhip is his grave, which is afterwards turned into a rock; which repreſents his monumental marble; his ſleep means death, through which alone man arrives at eternal felicity. Spondanus.

High at the head a branching olive grows,
And crowns the pointed cliffs with ſhady boughs.
Beneath, a gloomy grotto's cool receſs
Delights the Nereids of the neighb'ring ſeas;
Where bowls and urns were form'd of living ſtone,
And maſſy beams in native marble ſhone;
On which the labours of the nymphs were roll'd;
Their webs divine of purple mix'd with gold.
Within the cave, the cluſt'ring bees attend
Their waxen works, or from the roof depend.
Perpetual waters o'er the pavement glide;
Two marble doors unfold on either ſide;

v. 124. —— *A gloomy grotto's cool receſs.*] Porphyry has wrote a volume to explain this cave of the nymphs, with more piety perhaps than judgment; and another perſon has perverted it into the utmoſt obſcenity, and both allegorically. Porphyry (obſerves Euſtathius) is of opinion, that the cave means the world; it is called gloomy, but agreeable, becauſe it was made out of darkneſs, and afterwards ſet in this agreeable order by the hand of the deity. It is conſecrated to the nymphs; that is, it is deſtined to the habitation of ſpiritual ſubſtances united to the body; the bowls and urns of living ſtone, are the bodies which are formed out of the earth; the bees that make their honey in the cave are the ſouls of men, which perform all their operations in the body, and animate it; the beams on which the nymphs roll their webs, are the bones over which the admirable embroidery of nerves, veins, and arteries are ſpread; the fountains which water the cave are the ſeas, rivers and lakes that water the world; and the two gates, are the two poles; through the northern the ſouls deſcend from heaven to animate the body, through the ſouthern they aſcend to heaven, after they are ſeparated from the body by death. But I confeſs I ſhould rather chuſe to underſtand the deſcription poetically, believing that Homer never dreamed of theſe matters, though the age in which he flouriſhed was addicted to allegory. How often do painters draw from the imagination only, merely to pleaſe the eye? And why might not Homer write after it, eſpecially in this place where he manifeſtly indulges his fancy, while he brings his hero to the firſt dawning of happineſs? He has long dwelt upon a ſeries of horrours, and his imagination being tired with the melancholy ſtory, it is not impoſſible but his ſpirit might be enlivened with the ſubject while he wrote, and this might lead him to indulge his fancy in a wonderful, and perhaps fabulous deſcription. In ſhort, I ſhould much rather chuſe to believe that the memory of the things to which he alludes in the deſcription of the cave is loſt, than credit ſuch a laboured and diſtant allegory.

Sacred the ſouth, by which the gods deſcend,
But mortals enter at the northern end. 135

v. 134. *Sacred the ſouth, by which the gods deſcend*] Virgil has imitated the deſcription of this haven, Æn. lib. i.

" Eſt in ſeceſſu longo locus, inſula portum
" Efficit, objectu laterum, quibus omnis ab alto
" Frangitur," &c.——

Within a long receſs there lies a bay,
An iſland ſhades it from the rolling ſea,
And forms a port ſecure for ſhips to ride,
Broke by the jutting land on either ſide,
In double ſtreams the briny waters glide.
Betwixt two rows of rocks, a ſilvan ſcene
Appears above, and groves for ever green:
A grot is form'd beneath with moſſy ſeats,
To reſt the Nereids, and exclude the heats;
Down from the crannies of the living walls
The cryſtal ſtreams deſcend in murmuring falls,
No haſſers need to bind the veſſels here,
Nor bearded anchors, for no ſtorms they fear.

Dryden.

Scaliger infinitely prefers the Roman poet: Homer, ſays he, ſpeaks " humilia humiliter, Virgilius grandiora magnifice;" but what I would chiefly obſerve is, not what Virgil has imitated, but what he has omitted; namely, all that ſeems odd or leſs intelligible; I mean the works of the bees in a cave ſo damp and moiſt; and the two gates through which the gods and men enter.

I ſhall offer a conjecture to explain theſe two lines:

Sacred the ſouth, by which the gods deſcend,
But mortals enter at the northern end.

It has been already obſerved, that the Æthiopians held an annual ſacrifice of twelve days to the gods; all that time they carried their images in proceſſion, and placed them at their feſtivals, and for this reaſon the gods were ſaid to feaſt with the Æthiopians; that is, they were preſent with them by their ſtatues; thus alſo Themis was ſaid to form or diſſolve aſſemblies, becauſe they carried her image to the aſſemblies when they were convened, and when they were broken up they carried it away. Now we have already remarked, that this port was ſacred to Phorcys, becauſe he had a temple by it; it may not then be impoſſible, but that this temple having two doors, they might carry the ſtatues of the gods in their proceſſions through the ſouthern gate, which might be conſecrated to this uſe only, and the populace be forbid to enter by it: for that reaſon the deities were ſaid to enter, namely, by their images. As the other gate being allotted to common uſe, was ſaid to be the paſſage for mortals.

Thither they bent, and haul'd their ſhip to land,
(The crooked keel divides the yellow ſand)
Ulyſſes ſleeping on his couch they bore,
And gently plac'd him on the rocky ſhore.

v. 138. *Ulyſſes ſleeping on his couch they bore,*
And gently plac'd him on the rocky ſhore.]

There is nothing in the whole Odyſſey that more ſhocks our reaſon than the expoſing Ulyſſes aſleep on the ſhore by the Phæacians: "The paſſage (ſays Ariſtotle in his Poetics) where Ulyſſes is landed "in Ithaca, is ſo full of abſurdities, that they would be intolerable "in a bad poet; but Homer has concealed them under an infinity of "admirable beauties, with which he has adorned all that part of the "Odyſſey; theſe he has crowded together, as ſo many charms to "hinder our perceiving the defects of the ſtory:" Ariſtotle muſt be allowed to ſpeak with great judgment; for what probability is there that a man ſo prudent as Ulyſſes, who was alone in a veſſel at the diſcretion of ſtrangers, ſhould ſleep ſo ſoundly, as to be taken out of it, carried with all his baggage on ſhore, and the Phæacians ſhould ſet ſail, and he never awake? This is ſtill more abſurd, if we remember that Ulyſſes has his ſoul ſo ſtrongly bent upon his country; is it then poſſible, that he could be thus ſunk into a lethargy, in the moment when he arrives at it? "However (ſays Monſieur Dacier in his re-"flections upon Ariſtotle's Poetics) Homer was not aſhamed of that "abſurdity, but not being able to omit it, he uſed it to give proba-"bility to the ſucceeding ſtory: it was neceſſary for Ulyſſes to land "alone, in order to his concealment; if he had been diſcovered, the "ſuitors would immediately have deſtroyed him, if not as the real "Ulyſſes, yet under the pretext of his being an impoſtor; they "would then have ſeized his dominions, and married Penelope: "now if he had been waked, the Phæacians would have been "obliged to have attended him, which he could not have denied "with decency, nor accepted with ſafety: Homer therefore had no "other way left to unravel his fable happily: but he knew what "was abſurd in this method, and uſes means to hide it; he laviſhes "out all his wit and addreſs, and lays together ſuch an abun-"dance of admirable poetry, that the mind of the reader is ſo "inchanted, that he perceives not the defect; he is like Ulyſſes "lulled aſleep, and knows no more than that hero, how he comes "there. That great poet firſt deſcribes the ceremony of Ulyſſes "taking leave of Alcinous and his queen Arete; then he ſets off "the ſwiftneſs of the veſſel by two beautiful compariſons; he de-"ſcribes the haven with great exactneſs, and adds to it the de-"ſcription of the cave of the nymphs; this laſt aſtoniſhes the "reader, and he is ſo intent upon it, that he has not attention to "conſider the abſurdity in the manner of Ulyſſes's landing: in

His treaſures next, Alcinous' gifts, they laid
In the wild olive's unfrequented ſhade,
Secure from theft: then lanch'd the bark again,
Reſum'd their oars, and meaſur'd back the main.

" this moment when he perceives the mind of the reader as it were " intoxicated with theſe beauties, he ſteals Ulyſſes on ſhore, and " diſmiſſes the Phæacians; all this takes up but eight verſes. And " then leſt the reader ſhould reflect upon it, he immediately intro- " duces the deities, and gives us a dialogue between Jupiter and " Neptune. This keeps up ſtill our wonder, and our reaſon has not " time to deliberate; and when the dialogue is ended, a ſecond " wonder ſucceeds, the bark is transformed into a rock: this is done " in the ſight of the Phæacians, by which method the poet carries " us a while from the conſideration of Ulyſſes, by removing the " ſcene to a diſtant iſland; there he detains us till we may be ſup- " poſed to have forgot the paſt abſurdities, by relating the aſtoniſh- " ment of Alcinous at the ſight of the prodigy, and his offering up " to Neptune, to appeaſe his anger, a ſacrifice of twelve bulls. " Then he returns to Ulyſſes who now wakes, and not knowing the " place where he was, (becauſe Minerva made all things appear in a " diſguiſed view) he complains of his misfortunes, and accuſes the " Phæacians of infidelity; at length Minerva comes to him in the " ſhape of a young ſhepherd, &c. Thus this abſurdity, which ap- " pears in the fable when examined alone, is hidden by the beauties " that ſurround it; this paſſage is more adorned with fiction, and " more wrought up with a variety of poetical ornaments than moſt " other places of the Odyſſey. From hence Ariſtotle makes an ex- " cellent obſervation. All efforts imaginable (ſays that author) ought " to be made to form the fable rightly from the beginning; but if it " ſo happen that ſome places muſt neceſſarily appear abſurd, they " muſt be admitted, eſpecially if they contribute to render the reſt " more probable; but the poet ought to reſerve all the ornaments of " diction for theſe weak parts: the places that have either ſhining " ſentiments or manners have no occaſion for them, a dazzling ex- " preſſion rather damages them, and ſerves only to eclipſe their " beauty."

v. 142. —— *Then lanch'd the bark again.*] This voluntary and unexpected return of the Phæacians, and their landing Ulyſſes in his ſleep, ſeems as unaccountable on the part of the Phæacians, as of Ulyſſes; for what can be more abſurd than to ſee them expoſing a king and his effects upon the ſhores without his knowledge, and flying away ſecretly as from an enemy? Having therefore in the preceding note ſhewed what the critics ſay in condemnation of Homer, it is but juſtice to lay together what they ſay in his defence.

That the Phæacians ſhould fly away in ſecret is no wonder: Ulyſſes had through the whole courſe of the eleventh book, (particularly by the mouth of the prophet Tireſias) told the Phæacians

Nor yet forgot old ocean's dread ſupreme
The vengeance vow'd for eyeleſs Polypheme.

that the ſuitors plotted his deſtruction; and therefore the mariners might very reaſonably be apprehenſive that the ſuitors would uſe any perſons as enemies, who ſhould contribute to reſtore Ulyſſes to his country. It was therefore neceſſary that they ſhould ſail away without any ſtay upon the Ithacan ſhores. This is the reaſon why they made this voyage by night; namely to avoid diſcovery; and it was as neceſſary to return immediately, that is, juſt at the appearance of day, before people were abroad, that they might eſcape obſervation.

Euſtathius remarks, that the Phæacians were an unwarlike nation, or as it is expreſſed by a Phæacian,

Οὔ γὰς φαιήκεσσι μέλει βιὸς, ὅδε φαρέτρη,

and therefore they were afraid to teach any perſons the way to their own country, by diſcovering the courſe of navigation to it; for this reaſon they begin their voyage to Ithaca by night, land Ulyſſes without waking him, and return at the appearance of day-light, that they might not ſhew what courſe was to be ſteered to come to the Phæacian ſhores.

Plutarch in his treatiſe of Reading the Poets, tells us, that there is a tradition among the Tuſcans, that Ulyſſes was naturally drowſy, and a perſon that could not eaſily be converſed with, by reaſon of that ſleepy diſpoſition. But perhaps this might be only artful in a man of ſo great wiſdom, and ſo great diſguiſe or diſſimulation; he was ſlow to give anſwers, when he had no mind to give any at all: though indeed it muſt be confeſſed, that this tradition is countenanced by his behaviour in the Odyſſey, or rather may be only a ſtory formed from it: his greateſt calamities riſe from his ſleeping: when he was ready to land upon his own country by the favour of Æolus, he falls aſleep, and his companions let looſe a wind that bears him from it: he is aſleep while they kill the oxen of Apollo; and here he ſleeps while he is landed upon his own country. It might perhaps be this conduct in Homer, that gave Horace the hint to ſay,

"—— Aliquando bonus dormitat Homerus."

Implying, that when Homer was at a loſs to bring any difficult matter to an iſſue, he immediately laid his hero aſleep, and this ſolved all the difficulty; as in the above-mentioned inſtances.

Plutarch is of opinion, that this ſleep of Ulyſſes was feigned; and that he made uſe of the pretence of a "natural infirmity," to conceal the ſtraights he was in at that time in his thoughts; being aſhamed to diſmiſs the Phæacians without entertainment and gifts of hoſpitality, and afraid of being diſcovered by the ſuitors, if he entertained ſuch a multitude: therefore to avoid both theſe difficulties, he feigns a ſleep while they land him, till they ſail away.

Before the throne of mighty Jove he ſtood;
And ſought the ſecret counſels of the god.
Shall then no more, O ſire of gods! be mine
The rights and honours of a pow'r divine?
Scorn'd ev'n by man, and (oh ſevere diſgrace)
By ſoft Phæacians, my degenerate race!
Againſt yon' deſtin'd head in vain I ſwore,
And menac'd vengeance, ere he reach'd his ſhore;
To reach his natal ſhore was thy decree;
Mild I obey'd, for who ſhall war with thee?
Behold him landed, careleſs and aſleep,
From all th' eluded dangers of the deep!

Euſtathius agrees with Plutarch in the main, and adds another reaſon why the Phæacians land Ulyſſes ſleeping; namely, becauſe they were aſhamed to wake him, leſt he ſhould think they did it out of avarice, and expectation of a reward for bringing him to his own country.

I will only add, that there might be a natural reaſon for the ſleep of Ulyſſes; we are to remember that this is a voyage in the night, the ſeaſon of repoſe; and his ſpirits having been long agitated and fatigued by his calamities, might, upon his peace of mind at the return to his country, ſettle into a deep calmneſs and tranquillity, and ſo ſink him into a deep ſleep: Homer himſelf ſeems to give this as a reaſon of it in the following lines:

> Much danger, long and mighty toils he bore,
> In ſtorms by ſea, and combats on the ſhore;
> All which ſoft ſleep now baniſh'd from his breaſt,
> Wrapt in a pleaſing, deep, and death-like reſt.

It muſt be allowed that the laſt line admirably paves the way for the following account; and the poet undoubtedly inſerted it, to prevent our ſurpriſe at the manner of his being ſet on ſhore, by calling his ſleep

> —— a pleaſing, deep, and death-like reſt.

How far a wiſe man is obliged to reſiſt the calls of nature, I leave to the diſcuſſion of philoſophers; thoſe of ſleep are no more to be reſiſted, than thoſe of thirſt or hunger. But yet I confeſs Ulyſſes yielded unſeaſonably, and the ſtrong paſſion and love for his country that ſo fully poſſeſſed his ſoul, ſhould have given him a few hours of vigilance, when he was ready to ſee it after an abſence of almoſt twenty years.

Lo where he lies, amidſt a ſhining ſtore
Of braſs, rich garments, and refulgent ore:
And bears triumphant to his native iſle
A prize more worth than Ilion's noble ſpoil.
To whom the father of th' immortal pow'rs,
Who ſwells the clouds, and gladdens earth with ſhow'rs,
Can mighty Neptune thus of man complain!
Neptune, tremendous o'er the boundleſs main!
Rever'd and awful ev'n in heav'n's abodes,
Antient and great! a god above the gods!
If that low race offend thy pow'r divine,
(Weak, daring creatures!) is not vengeance thine?
Go then, the guilty at thy will chaſtiſe.
He ſaid: the ſhaker of the earth replies.
This then I doom; to fix the gallant ſhip
A mark of vengeance on the ſable deep:

v. 172. *This then I doom; to fix the gallant ſhip*
A mark of vengeance ——
And roots her down, an everlaſting rock.]

I refer the reader to the eighth book of the Odyſſey, for a further account of this transformation. Scaliger condemns it, "Ulyſſis navis "in ſaxum mutatur a Neptuno, ut immortalem faciat, quem odio "habere debuit." But will it not be an anſwer to ſay, that it is an immortal monument of the vengeance and power of Neptune, and that whenever the ſtory of the veſſel was mentioned, the punishment likewiſe muſt be remembered in honour of that deity? Some are of opinion, that it is a phyſical allegory, and that Homer delivers the opinion of the antients concerning the tranſmutation of one ſpecies into another, as wood into ſtone, by water, that is, by Neptune the god of it: according to thoſe lines of Ovid,

"Flumen habent Cicones, quod potum ſaxea reddit
"Viſcera, quod tactis inducit marmora rebus."

But perhaps this is only one of thoſe marvellous fictions written after the taſte of antiquity, which delighted in wonders, and which the nature of epic poetry allows. "The marvellous (ſays Ari-"ſtotle in his Poetics) ought to take place in tragedy, but much "more in the epic, in which it proceeds even to the extravagant; "for the marvellous is always agreeable, and a proof of it is, that "thoſe who relate any thing, generally add ſomething to the truth "of it, that it may better pleaſe thoſe who hear it. Homer (con-

To warn the thoughtleſs ſelf-confiding train,
No more unlicens'd thus to brave the main.
Full in their port a ſhady hill ſhall riſe
If ſuch thy will.—We will it, Jove replies.
Ev'n when with tranſport black'ning all the ſtrand,
The ſwarming people hail their ſhip to land,
Fix her for ever, a memorial ſtone:
Still let her ſeem to ſail, and ſeem alone;
The trembling crouds ſhall ſee the ſudden ſhade
Of whelming mountains overhang their head!
With that, the god whoſe earthquakes rock the ground,
Fierce to Phæacia croſt the vaſt profound.

" tinues he) is the man who has given the beſt inſtructions to other " poets how to tell lies agreeably." Horace is of the ſame opinion.

" Atque ita mentitur, ſic veris falſa remiſcet,
" Primo ne medium, medio ne diſcrepet imum."

However, we muſt not think that Ariſtotle adviſes poets to put things evidently falſe and impoſſible into their poems, or gives them licence to run out into wildneſs; he only means (as Monſieur Dacier obſerves) that the wonderful ſhould exceed the probable, but not deſtroy it; and this will be effected if the poet has the addreſs to prepare the reader, and to lead him by a probable train of things that depend on miracle, to the miracle itſelf, and reconcile him to it by degrees, ſo that his reaſon does not perceive, at leaſt is not ſhocked at the illuſion: thus for inſtance, Homer puts this transformation into the hands of a deity. He prepares us for it in the eighth book, he gives us the reaſon of the transformation; namely, the anger of Neptune; and at laſt he brings in Jupiter aſſenting to it. This is the method Homer takes to reconcile it to probability. Virgil undoubtedly thought it a beauty; for, after Homer's example, he gives us a transformation of the ſhips of Æneas into ſea-nymphs.

I have already remarked from Boſſu, that ſuch miracles as theſe ought not to be too frequent in an epic poem; all the machines that require divine probability ought to be ſo detached from the action of the poem, that they may be retrenched from it, without deſtroying the action: thoſe that are eſſential to the action, ought to be founded upon human probability. Thus if we take away this transformation, there is no chaſm; and it in no way affects the integrity of the action.

Swift as a ſwallow ſweeps the liquid way,
The winged pinnace ſhot along the ſea.
The god arreſts her with a ſudden ſtroke,
And roots her down an everlaſting rock.
Aghaſt the Scherians ſtand in deep ſurpriſe;
All preſs to ſpeak, all queſtion with their eyes.
What hands unſeen the rapid bark reſtrain!
And yet it ſwims, or ſeems to ſwim, the main!
Thus they, unconſcious of the deed divine:
'Till great Alcinous riſing own'd the ſign.
Behold the long predeſtin'd day! (he cries)
Oh certain faith of antient prophecies!
Theſe ears have heard my royal ſire diſcloſe
A dreadful ſtory, big with future woes;
How mov'd with wrath, that careleſs we convey
Promiſcuous ev'ry gueſt to ev'ry bay,
Stern Neptune rag'd; and how by his command
Firm rooted in the ſurge a ſhip ſhould ſtand;
(A monument of wrath) and mound on mound
Shou'd hide our walls, or whelm beneath the ground.
The fates have follow'd as declar'd the ſeer.
Be humbled, nations! and your monarch hear.
No more unlicens'd brave the deeps, no more
With ev'ry ſtranger paſs from ſhore to ſhore;
On angry Neptune now for mercy call:
To his high name let twelve black oxen fall.
So may the god reverſe his purpos'd will,
Nor o'er our city hang the dreadful hill.

v. 212 *So may the god reverſe his purpos'd will.*] This agrees with what Homer writes in a former part of the Odyſſey.

—— ςρεπτοὶ ϗ θεοὶ αὐτοὶ.

That the gods themſelves may be prevailed upon to change their anger by prayer: a ſentiment agreeable to true religion. Homer does not tell us that the laſt denunciation of covering the town with a mountain, was fulfilled: it is probable that it was averted by the piety of Alcinous. But (as Euſtathius obſerves) it was artful in the

The monarch ſpoke: they trembled and obey'd,
Forth on the ſands the victim oxen led:
The gather'd tribes before the altars ſtand,
And chiefs and rulers a majeſtic band.
The king of ocean all the tribes implore;
The blazing altars redden all the ſhore.
Meanwhile Ulyſſes in his country lay,
Releas'd from ſleep, and round him might ſurvey
The ſolitary ſhore, and rolling ſea.
Yet had his mind thro' tedious abſence loſt
The dear remembrance of his native coaſt;
Beſides, Minerva, to ſecure her care,
Diffus'd around a veil of thicken'd air:

poet to leave this point doubtful, to avoid detection in deviating from true hiſtory; for ſhould poſterity enquire where this land of the Phæacians lay, it would be found to be Corfu of the Venetians, and not covered with any mountain; but ſhould this city have happened to have been utterly aboliſhed by time, and ſo loſt to poſterity, it would have agreed with the relation of Homer, who leaves room to ſuppoſe it deſtroyed by Neptune. But how could Neptune be ſaid to cover it with a mountain? Had not an inundation been more ſuitable to the god of the ocean? Neptune is called ἐννοσίγαιος, and ἐνοσίχθων, or the earth-ſhaker: earthquakes were ſuppoſed to be occaſioned by the ocean, or waters concealed in the caverns of the ground; and conſequently Neptune may tumble a mountain upon this city of the Phæacians.

v. 225. *Beſides, Minerva, to ſecure her care,*
Diffus'd around a veil of thicken'd air.]

The meaning of this whole paſſage is probably no more than that Ulyſſes by his long abſence had forgot the face of his own country; the woods by almoſt twenty years growth had a different appearance; and the public roads were altered by ſo great a length of time. How then ſhould Ulyſſes come to the knowledge of the place? He goes to a ſhepherd, and by telling him a plauſible ſtory, draws it from him. This artifice is the Minerva that gives him information. By the "veil of thicken'd air" is meant, that Ulyſſes, to accompliſh his re-eſtabliſhment, took upon him a diſguiſe, and concealed himſelf from the Ithacans; and this too being the dictate of wiſdom, Homer aſcribes it to Pallas,

The words of the original are,

——Ὄφρά μιν αὐτὸν
Ἄγνωστον τεύξειεν ——

For ſo the gods ordain'd to keep unſeen
His royal perſon from his friends and queen;
'Till the proud ſuitors for their crimes afford
An ample vengeance to their injur'd lord.
Now all the land another proſpect bore,
Another port appear'd, another ſhore,
And long-continu'd ways, and winding floods,
And unknown mountains, crown'd with unknown woods
Penſive and ſlow, with ſudden grief oppreſt
The king aroſe, and beat his careful breaſt,
Caſt a long look o'er all the coaſt and main,
And ſought, around, his native realm in vain:
Then with erected eyes ſtood fix'd in woe,
And as he ſpoke, the tears began to flow.
Ye gods! (he cry'd) upon what barren coaſt
In what new region is Ulyſſes toſt?

which are uſually applied by interpreters to Ulyſſes, and mean that the goddeſs diſguiſed him with this veil, that no one might know him. Dacier is of opinion that ἄγνως ought to be uſed actively; that is, the goddeſs acted thus to make him "unknowing" where he was, not "unknown" to the people; for that this was the effect of the veil, appears from the removal of it; for immediately upon the diſperſion,

The king with joy confeſs'd his place of birth.

That the word ἄγνως will bear an active ſignification, ſhe proves from the ſcholiaſt upon Oedipus of Sophocles. But perhaps the context will not permit this interpretation, though we ſhould allow that the word ἄγνως will bear it. The paſſage runs thus: Pallas caſt round a veil of air, that ſhe might make him unknown, that ſhe might inſtruct him, and that his wife and friends might not know him; for thus Homer interprets ἄγνωστον in the very next line, μὴ γνοίη ἄλοχος. It is therefore probable, that this veil had a double effect, both to render Ulyſſes unknown to the country, and the country to Ulyſſes. I am perſuaded that this is the true meaning of ἄμωστος, from the uſage of it in this very book of the Odyſſey.

Ἀλλ', ἄγε, σ' ἄγνωστον τεύξω πάντεσσι βροτοῖσι.

Here it can poſſibly ſignify nothing, but "I will render thee unknown to all mankind;" it is therefore probable, that in both places it bears the ſame ſignification.

Poſſeſs'd by wild barbarians, fierce in arms?
Or men, whoſe boſom tender pity warms?
Where ſhall this treaſure now in ſafety lie?
And whither, whither its ſad owner fly?
Ah why did I Alcinous' grace implore?
Ah why forſake Phæacia's happy ſhore?
Some juſter prince perhaps had entertain'd,
And ſafe reſtor'd to me my native land.
Is this the promis'd, long expected coaſt,
And this the faith Phæacia's rulers boaſt?
Oh righteous gods! of all the great, how few
Are juſt to heav'n, and to their promiſe true!
But he, the pow'r to whoſe all-ſeeing eyes
The deeds of men appear without diſguiſe,
'Tis his alone t'avenge the wrongs I bear:
For ſtill th' oppreſs'd are his peculiar care.
To count theſe preſents, and from thence to prove
Their faith, is mine: the reſt belongs to Jove.
Then on the ſands he rang'd his wealthy ſtore,
The gold, the veſts, the tripods, number'd o'er:
All theſe he found, but ſtill in errour loſt
Diſconſolate he wanders on the coaſt,

v. 262. *The gold, the veſts, the tripods, number'd o'er.*] The conduct of Ulyſſes in numbering his effects, has been cenſured by ſome critics as avaricious: but we find him vindicated by Plutarch in his treatiſe of Reading the Poets: "If (ſays that author) Ulyſſes finding himſelf in a ſolitary place, and ignorant of the country, and having no ſecurity even for his own perſon, is nevertheleſs chiefly ſolicitous, for his effects, leſt any part might have been ſtolen; his covetouſneſs is really to be pitied and deteſted. But this is not the caſe: he counts his goods merely to prove the fidelity of the Phæacians, and to gather from it, whether they had landed him upon his own country; for it was not probable that they would expoſe him in a ſtrange region, and leave his goods untouched, and by conſequence reap no advantage from their diſhoneſty: this therefore was a proper teſt, from which to diſcover, if he was in his own country, and he deſerved commendation for his wiſdom in that action."

Sighs for his country, and laments again
To the deaf rocks, and hoarſe reſounding main.
When lo! the guardian goddeſs of the wiſe,
Celeſtial Pallas ſtood before his eyes;
In ſhow a youthful ſwain, of form divine,
Who ſeem'd deſcended from ſome princely line,
A graceful robe her ſlender body dreſt,
Around her ſhoulders flew the waving veſt,
Her decent hand a ſhining jav'lin bore,
And painted ſandals on her feet ſhe wore.
To whom the king. Whoe'er of human race
Thou art, that wander'ſt in this deſert place!
With joy to thee, as to ſome god, I bend,
To thee my treaſures and myſelf commend,
O tell a wretch in exile doom'd to ſtray,
What air I breathe, what country I ſurvey?
The fruitful continent's extreameſt bound,
Or ſome fair iſle which Neptune's arms ſurround?
From what fair clime (ſaid ſhe) remote from fame,
Arriv'ſt thou here a ſtranger to our name?
Thou ſeeſt an iſland, not to thoſe unknown
Whoſe hills are brighten'd by the riſing ſun,
Nor thoſe that plac'd beneath his utmoſt reign
Behold him ſinking in the weſtern main.
The rugged ſoil allows no level ſpace
For flying chariots, or the rapid race;
Yet not ungrateful to the peaſant's pain,
Suffices fulneſs to the ſwelling grain:
The loaded trees their various fruits produce,
And cluſt'ring grapes afford a gen'rous juice:

v. 293. *The loaded trees their various fruits produce.*] Nothing is more notorious than that an epic writer ought to give importance and grandeur to his action as much as poſſible in every circumſtance; here the poet takes an opportunity to ſet the country of Ulyſſes in the moſt advantageous light, and ſhews that it was a prize worth the conteſt, and all the labour which Ulyſſes beſtows to regain it. Statius is very faulty in this particular; he declaims

Woods crown our mountains, and in ev'ry grove
The bounding goats and friſking heifers rove:
Soft rains and kindly dews refreſh the field,
And riſing ſprings eternal verdure yield.
Ev'n to thoſe ſhores is Ithaca renown'd,
Where Troy's majeſtic ruins ſtrow the ground.

againſt the deſigns he aſcribes to his heroes, he debaſes his own ſubject, and ſhews that the great labour he puts upon them was ill employed for ſo wretched and pitiful a kingdom as that of Thebes. Thebaid, lib i.

" —— Bellum eſt de paupere regno."

But Ulyſſes was not king of Ithaca alone, but of Zacynthus, and Cephalenia, and the neighbouring iſlands. This appears from the ſecond book of the Iliad, where he leads his ſubjects to the walls of Troy.

With thoſe whom Cephalenia's iſle inclos'd,
Or till'd their fields along the coaſt oppos'd,
Or where fair Ithaca o'erlooks the floods,
Where high Neritos ſhakes his waving woods,
Where Ægilipa's rugged ſides are ſeen,
Crocylia rocky, and Zacynthus green.

It is true that Ithaca contains little more than fifty miles in circuit, now called Val de Compare; Cephalenia is larger, and is one hundred and ſixty miles in circumference: Zacynthus, now Zant, is in circuit about ſixty miles, unſpeakably fruitful, ſays Sandys, producing the beſt oil in the world, and excellent ſtrong wines; but the chief riches of the iſland conſiſt in corinths, which the inhabitants of Zant have in ſuch quantities that they know not what to do with them; for beſides private gains, amounting to fifteen hundred thouſand zechins, they yearly pay forty-eight thouſand dollars for cuſtoms and other duties. It is impoſſible ſo little a portion of earth ſhould be more beneficial.

This obſervation is neceſſary to ſhew the value of Ulyſſes's dominions, and that the ſubject of the Odyſſey is not trivial and unimportant; it is likewiſe of uſe to convince us, that the domeſtic cares and concerns of Telemachus proceeded not from meanneſs, but from the manners of the age; when pomp and luxury had not yet found countenance from princes; and that when we ſee Eumæus, who has the charge of Ulyſſes's hogs, we are not to ſuppoſe him a perſon of low rank and fortunes, but an officer of ſtate and truſt: the riches of thoſe ages conſiſting in flocks and herds, in ſwine and oxen.

v. 299. *Ev'n to thoſe ſhores is Ithaca renown'd.*] Nothing can more raiſe our eſteem of the judgment of Homer, than ſuch ſtrokes of

At this, the chief with tranſport was poſſeſt,
His panting heart exulted in his breaſt;
Yet well diſſembling his untimely joys,
And veiling truth in plauſible diſguiſe,
Thus, with an air ſincere, in fiction bold,
His ready tale th' inventive hero told.
Oft' have I heard in Crete, this iſland's name;
For 'twas from Crete my native ſoil I came,
Self-baniſh'd thence. I ſail'd before the wind,
And left my children and my friends behind.
From fierce Idomeneus' revenge I flew,
Whoſe ſon, the ſwift Orſilochus, I ſlew:

art. Here he introduces Minerva to let Ulyſſes into the knowledge of his country: How does ſhe do this? She geographically deſcribes it to him; ſo that he muſt almoſt know it by the deſcription: but ſtill ſhe ſuppreſſes the name, and this keeps him in a pleaſing ſuſpence; he attends to every ſyllable to hear her name Ithaca, which ſhe ſtill defers, to continue his doubts and hopes, and at laſt, in the very cloſe of her ſpeech, ſhe indirectly mentions it. This diſcovery, in my judgment, is carried on with great addreſs, and cannot fail of awakening the curioſity of the reader; and I wonder how it could eſcape the obſervation of all the commentators upon the Odyſſey.

v. 311. *From fierce Idomeneus' revenge I flew,*
Whoſe ſon, the ſwift Orſilochus, I ſlew.

Euſtathius obſerves, that this relation is not conſonant to antient hiſtories, but invented to make the diſguiſed Ulyſſes more acceptable to the ſuitors, ſhould he be brought before them. For this perſon whom they could not know to be Ulyſſes, could not fail of finding favour with them, having ſlain the ſon of Idomeneus the friend of Ulyſſes: and though it be not recorded by the antients, yet it may be conjectured, that Orſilochus was thus ſlain, though not by Ulyſſes. If the death of Orſilochus was a ſtory that made a noiſe in the world about that time, it was very artful in Ulyſſes to make uſe of it, to gain credit with this ſeeming Ithacan; for he relating the fact truly, might juſtly be believed to ſpeak truly when he named himſelf the author of it, and conſequently avoid all ſuſpicion of being Ulyſſes. It is obſervable that Ulyſſes is very circumſtantial in his ſtory; he relates the time, the place, the manner, and the reaſon of his killing Orſilochus: this is done to give the ſtory a greater air of truth; for it ſeems almoſt impoſſible that ſo many circumſtances could be invented in a moment, and ſo well laid together as not to diſcover their own falſity. What he ſays concerning the Phæacians leaving

(With brutal force he ſeiz'd my Trojan prey,
Due to the toils of many a bloody day)
Unſeen I 'ſcap'd; and favour'd by the night
In a Phœnician veſſel took my flight,

his effects entire without any damage, is not ſpoken (as Euſtathius obſerves) in vain: he extols the fidelity of the Phæacians, as an example to be imitated by this ſeeming Ithacenſian, and makes it an argument that he ſhould practiſe the ſame integrity, in not offering violence or fraud to his effects or perſon.

It is true, the manner of the death of Oſilochus is liable to ſome objection, as it was executed clandeſtinely, and not heroically, as might be expected from the valour of Ulyſſes; but if it was a truth that Oſilochus was killed in that manner, Ulyſſes could not falſify the ſtory: but in reality he is no way concerned in it; for he ſpeaks in the character of a Cretan, not in the perſon of Ulyſſes.

v. 316. *In a Phœnician veſſel took my flight*] The whole ſtory of the voyages of Ulyſſes is related differently by Dictys Cretenſis, in his hiſtory of the war of Troy: I will tranſcribe it, if not as a truth, yet as a curioſity.

" About this time Ulyſſes arrived at Crete with two veſſels hired " of the Phœnicians: for Telamon, enraged for the death of his " ſon Ajax, had ſeized upon all that belonged to Ulyſſes and his " companions, and he himſelf was with difficulty ſet at liberty. " While he was in Crete, Idomeneus aſked him how he fell into " ſuch great calamities; to whom he recounted all his adventures. " He told him, that after his departure from Troy he made an incur- " ſion upon Iſmarus of the Ciconians, and there got great booty; " then touching upon the coaſt of the Lotophagi, he met with ill ſuc- " ceſs, and ſailed away to Sicily; there Cyclops and Læſtrigon, two " brothers, uſed him barbarouſly; and at length he loſt moſt of his " companions through the cruelty of Polypheme and Antiphates, the " ſons of Cyclops and Læſtrigon; but being afterwards received into " favour by Polypheme, his companions attempted to carry off Arene, " the king's daughter, who was fallen in love with Elpenor, one of " his aſſociates; but the affair being diſcovered, and Ulyſſes diſ- " miſſed, he ſailed away by the Æolian iſlands, and came to Circe " and Calypſo, who were both queens of two iſles; there his com- " panions waſted ſome time in dalliance and pleaſures; thence he " ſailed to a people that were famed for magical incantations, to " learn his future fortunes. He eſcaped the rocks of the Sirens, " Scylla, and Charybdis, though he there loſt many of his compa- " nions; then he fell into the hands of Phœnician rovers, who " ſpared him; and afterwards coming to Crete, he was diſmiſſed by " Idomeneus with two veſſels, and arrived at the coaſt of Alcinous, " who being prevailed upon by the glory of his name, entertained " him courteouſly: from him he learned that Penelope was ad-

For Pyle or Elis bound: but tempeſt toſt
And raging billows drove us on your coaſt.
In dead of night an unknown port we gain'd,
Spent with fatigue, and ſlept ſecure on land.
But ere the roſy morn renew'd the day,
While in th' embrace of pleaſing ſleep I lay,
Sudden, invited by auſpicious gales,
They land my goods, and hoiſt their flying ſails.
Abandon'd here, my fortune I deplore,
A hapleſs exile on a foreign ſhore.
Thus while he ſpoke, the blue-ey'd maid began
With pleaſing ſmiles to view the god-like man:
Then chang'd her form: and now, divinely bright,
Jove's heav'nly daughter ſtood confeſs'd to ſight.
Like a fair virgin in her beauty's bloom,
Skill'd in th' illuſtrious labours of the loom.
O ſtill the ſame Ulyſſes! ſhe rejoin'd,
In uſeful craft ſucceſsfully refin'd!
Artful in ſpeech, in action, and in mind!

" dreſſed by thirty princes; upon this, with much intreaty, he per-
" ſuaded Alcinous to undertake a voyage to re-eſtabliſh him in his
" territories; they ſet ſail together, and concealing themſelves with
" Telemachus till all things were concerted, they led their friends to
" the palace, and ſlew the ſuitors oppreſſed with ſleep and drowzi-
" neſs."

The difference between the poet and the hiſtorian lies chiefly in what is here ſaid of the death of Orſilochus; Dictys tells us, that Ulyſſes was entertained like a friend by Idomeneus, and Homer writes that he ſlew his ſon; now Idomeneus cannot be ſuppoſed to have favoured the murtherer of his ſon: but this is no objection, if we conſider that Ulyſſes ſpeaks not as Ulyſſes, but in a perſonated character, and therefore Orſilochus muſt be judged to have fallen by the hand of the perſon whoſe character Ulyſſes aſſumes; that is, by a Cretan, and not Ulyſſes.

Dictys is ſuppoſed to have ſerved under this Idomeneus, and to have wrote an hiſtory of the Trojan war in Phœnician characters; and Tzetzes tells us, that Homer formed his poem upon his plan; but the hiſtory now extant, publiſhed by Mrs. Le Fevre, is a counterfeit: ſo that what I have here tranſlated, is inſerted not as an authority, but as the opinion of an unknown writer; and I lay no other weight upon it.

Suffic'd it not, that thy long labours paſt
Secure thou ſeeſt thy native ſhore at laſt?
But this to me? who, like thyſelf, excell
In arts of counſel, and diſſembling well.
To me, whoſe wit exceeds the pow'rs divine,
No leſs than mortals are ſurpaſs'd by thine.
Know'ſt thou not me? who made thy life my care,
Thro' ten years wand'ring, and thro' ten years war;
Who taught thee arts, Alcinous to perſuade,
To raiſe his wonder, and engage his aid:
And now appear, thy treaſures to protect,
Conceal thy perſon, thy deſigns direct,
And tell what more thou muſt from fate expect.
Domeſtic woes far heavier to be borne!
The pride of fools, and ſlaves inſulting ſcorn.

v. 338. ——— *Who, like thyſelf, excell*
In arts of counſel, and diſſembling well]

It has been objected againſt Homer, that he gives a degree of diſſimulation to his hero, unworthy of a brave man, and an ingenuous diſpoſition: here we have a full vindication of Ulyſſes, from the mouth of the goddeſs of wiſdom; he uſes only a prudent diſſimulation; he is ἀϛχινόος, which we may almoſt literally render, "maſter of a great preſence of mind:" that is, upon every emergency he finds an immediate reſource to extricate himſelf from it. If his diſſimulation had been vicious, it would have been an abſurdity to have introduced Minerva praiſing and recommending it; on the contrary, all diſguiſe which conſiſts with innocence and prudence, is ſo far from being mean, that it really is a praiſe to a perſon who uſes it. I ſpeak not of common life, or as if men ſhould always act under a maſk, and in diſguiſe; that indeed betrays deſign and inſincerity: I only recommend it as an inſtance how men ſhould behave in the article of danger, when it is as reputable to elude an enemy as to defeat one.

——— "Dolus an virtus quis in hoſte requirit."

This is the character of Ulyſſes, who uſes only ſuch artifice as is ſuggeſted by wiſdom, ſuch as turns to his benefit in all extremities, ſuch as Minerva may boaſt to practiſe without a rival among the gods, as much as Ulyſſes among mankind. In ſhort, this diſſimulation in war may be called ſtratagem and conduct, in other exigencies addreſs and dexterity; nor is Ulyſſes criminal, but artful.

But thou be ſilent, nor reveal thy ſtate;
Yield to the force of unreſiſted fate,
And bear unmov'd the wrongs of baſe mankind,
The laſt, and hardeſt, conqueſt of the mind.
Goddeſs of wiſdom! Ithacus replies,
He who diſcerns thee muſt be truly wiſe,
So ſeldom view'd, and ever in diſguiſe!
When the bold Argives led their warring pow'rs,
Againſt proud Ilion's well defended tow'rs;
Ulyſſes was thy care, celeſtial maid!
Grac'd with thy ſight, and favour'd with thy aid.
But when the Trojan piles in aſhes lay,
And bound for Greece we plough'd the wat'ry way;
Our fleet diſpers'd and driv'n from coaſt to coaſt,
Thy ſacred preſence from that hour I loſt:
'Till I beheld thy radiant form once more,
And heard thy counſels on Phæacia's ſhore.
But, by th' almighty author of thy race,
Tell me, oh tell, is this my native place?
For much I fear, long tracts of land and ſea
Divide this coaſt from diſtant Ithaca;
The ſweet deluſion kindly you impoſe,
To ſoothe my hopes, and mitigate my woes.
Thus he. The blue-ey'd goddeſs thus replies.
How prone to doubt, how cautious are the wiſe!
Who, vers'd in fortune, fear the flatt'ring ſhow,
And taſte not half the bliſs the gods beſtow.

v. 369. *Tell me, oh tell, is this my native place?*] It may appear ſomewhat extraordinary that Ulyſſes ſhould not be inform'd by Minerva, who had already aſſured him that he was landed in his own country: but two anſwers may be given to this objection, and his doubts may be aſcribed to his having loſt the knowledge of it through his long abſence, for that is the veil which is caſt before his eyes; or to the nature of man in general, who when he deſires any thing vehemently, ſcarce believes himſelf in the poſſeſſion of it, even while he poſſeſſes it. Nothing is more frequent than ſuch expreſſions upon the theatre, and in the tranſport of an unexpected happineſs, we are apt to think it a deluſion; from hence the fears of Ulyſſes ariſe, and they are to be imputed to his vehement love of his country, not to his unbelief.

The more ſhall Pallas aid thy juſt deſires,
And guard the wiſdom which herſelf inſpires.
Others, long abſent from their native place,
Straight ſeek their home, and fly with eager pace
To their wives arms, and children's dear embrace.
Not thus Ulyſſes; he decrees to prove
His ſubjects faith, and queen's ſuſpected love;
Who mourn'd her lord twice ten revolving years,
And waſtes the days in grief, the nights in tears.
But Pallas knew (thy friends and navy loſt,)
Once more 'twas given thee to behold thy coaſt:
Yet how could I with adverſe fate engage,
And mighty Neptune's unrelenting rage?
Now lift thy longing eyes, while I reſtore
The pleaſing proſpect of thy native ſhore.
Behold the port of Phorcys! fenc'd around
With rocky mountains, and with olives crown'd.
Behold the gloomy grot! whoſe cool receſs
Delights the Nereids of the neighb'ring ſeas:
Whoſe now-neglected altars, in thy reign
Bluſh'd with the blood of ſheep and oxen ſlain.
Behold! where Neritus the clouds divides,
And ſhakes the waving foreſts on his ſides.
So ſpake the goddeſs, and the proſpect clear'd,
The miſts diſpers'd, atd all the coaſt appear'd.
The king with joy confeſs'd his place of birth,
And on his knees ſalutes his mother earth:
Then with his ſuppliant hands upheld in air,
Thus to the ſea-green ſiſters ſends his pray'r.
All hail! Ye virgin daughters of the main!
Ye ſtreams, beyond my hopes beheld again!
To you once more your own Ulyſſes bows;
Attend his tranſports, and receive his vows!
If Jove prolong my days, and Pallas crown
The growing virtues of my youthful ſon,

To you ſhall rites divine be ever paid,
And grateful off'rings on your altars laid.
Then thus Minerva. From that anxious breaſt
Diſmiſs thoſe cares, and leave to heav'n the reſt.
Our taſk be now thy treaſur'd ſtores to ſave,
Deep in the cloſe receſſes of the cave:
Then future means conſult—ſhe ſpoke, and trod
The ſhady grot, that brighten'd with the god.
The cloſeſt caverns of the grot ſhe ſought:
The gold, the braſs, the robes, Ulyſſes brought;
Theſe in the ſecret gloom the chief diſpos'd;
The entrance with a rock the goddeſs clos'd.
Now, ſeated in the olive's ſacred ſhade,
Confer the hero and the martial maid.
The goddeſs of the azure eyes began:
Son of Laertes! much experienc'd man!
The ſuitor-train thy earlieſt care demand,
Of that luxurious race to rid the land:
Three years thy houſe their lawleſs rule has ſeen,
And proud addreſſes to the matchleſs queen.
But ſhe thy abſence mourns from day to day,
And inly bleeds, and ſilent waſtes away:
Eluſive of the bridal hour, ſhe gives
Fond hopes to all, and all with hopes deceives.
To this Ulyſſes. Oh celeſtial maid!
Prais'd be thy counſel, and thy timely aid:
Elſe had I ſeen my native walls in vain,
Like great Atrides juſt reſtor'd and ſlain.
Vouchſafe the means of vengeance to debate,
And plan with all thy arts the ſcene of fate.
Then, then be preſent, and my ſoul inſpire,
As when we wrapt Troy's heav'n-built walls in fire.
Tho' leagu'd againſt me hundred heroes ſtand,
Hundreds ſhall fall, if Pallas aid my hand.

v. 445. *Tho' leagu'd againſt me hundreds*, &c.] Nothing is more judicious than this conduct in Homer; the whole number of ſuitors

She anſwer'd: in the dreadful day of fight
Know, I am with thee, ſtrong in all my might.
If thou but equal to thyſelf be found,
What gaſping numbers then ſhall preſs the ground!
What human victims ſtain the feaſtful floor!
How wide the pavements float with guilty gore!
It fits thee now to wear a dark diſguiſe,
And ſecret walk, unknown to mortal eyes.
For this, my hand ſhall wither ev'ry grace,
And ev'ry elegance of form and face,
O'er thy ſmooth ſkin a bark of wrinkles ſpread,
Turn hoar the auburn honours of thy head,
Diſfigure ev'ry limb with coarſe attire,
And in thy eyes extinguiſh all the fire;
Add all the wants and the decays of life,
Eſtrange thee from thy own; thy ſon, thy wife;
From the loath'd object ev'ry ſight ſhall turn,
And the blind ſuitors their deſtruction ſcorn.

are to be ſlain by a few hands, which might ſhock our reaſon if it were related ſuddenly, without any preparation to ſhew us the probability of it: this is the intent of Homer in this and various other places of the Odyſſey: he ſoftens the relation, and reconciles us to it by ſuch inſertions, before he deſcribes that great event. The antients (ſays Euſtathius) would not here allow Ulyſſes to ſpeak hyperbolically; he is that hero whom we have already ſeen in the Iliad reſiſt whole bands of Trojans, when the Greeks were repulſed, where he ſlew numbers of enemies, and ſuſtained their aſſaults till he was diſengaged by Ajax. Beſides, there is an excellent moral in what Ulyſſes ſpeaks; it contains this certain truth, (adds Dacier) that a man aſſiſted by heaven, has not only nothing to fear, but is aſſured to triumph over all the united powers of mankind.

v. 452. *How wide the pavements float with guilty gore!*] The words in the Greek are ἄσπετον ὕδας, which Euſtathius imagines to ſignify the land of Ithaca; for the hall even of a palace is too narrow to be ſtiled immenſe, or ἄσπετον. But this contradicts the matter of fact, as appears from the place where the ſuitors were ſlain, which was not in the fields of Ithaca, but in the palace of Ulyſſes: ἄσπετον really ſignifies large or ſpacious; and a palace that could entertain at one time ſo great a number of ſuitors might be called vaſt, or ἄσπετος, which Heſychius interprets by λίαν πολὺς, μέγας. Dacier.

Go firſt the maſter of thy herds to find,
True to his charge, a loyal ſwain and kind:
For thee he ſighs; and to the royal heir
And chaſte Penelope extends his care.
At the Coracian rock he now reſides,
Where Arethuſa's ſable water glides;
The ſable water and the copious maſt
Swell the fat herd; luxuriant, large repaſt!
With him, reſt peaceful in the rural cell,
And all you aſk his faithful tongue ſhall tell.
Me into other realms my cares convey,
To Sparta, ſtill with female beauty gay;
For know, to Sparta thy lov'd offspring came,
To learn thy fortunes from the voice of fame.
At this the father, with a father's care.
Muſt he to ſuffer: he, oh goddeſs! bear
Of wand'rings and of woes a wretched ſhare?
Thro' the wild ocean plough the dang'rous way,
And leave his fortunes and his houſe a prey?
Why would'ſt not thou, oh all-enlighten'd mind!
Inform him certain, and protect him, kind?
To whom Minerva. Be thy ſoul at reſt;
And know, whatever heav'n ordains, is beſt.
To fame I ſent him, to acquire renown:
To other regions is his virtue known.

v. 465. *Go firſt the maſter of thy herds to find.*] There are many reaſons why this injunction was neceſſary: the hero of a poem ought never to be out of ſight, never out of action; neither is Ulyſſes idle in this receſs; he goes thither to acquaint himſelf with the condition of his affairs, both public and domeſtic: he there lays the plan for the deſtruction of the ſuitors, enquires after their numbers, and the ſtate of Penelope and Telemachus. Beſides, he here reſides in full ſecurity and privacy, till he has prepared all things for the execution of the great event of the whole Odyſſey.

v. 469.——*Coracian rock.*——————] This rock was ſo called from a young man whoſe name was Corax, who in purſuit of an hare fell from it and broke his neck: Arethuſa his mother hearing of the accident, hanged herſelf by the fountain, which afterwards took its name from her, and was called Arethuſa. Euſtathius.

Secure he ſits, near great Atrides plac'd ;
With friendſhip ſtrengthen'd, and with honours grac'd.
But lo ! an ambuſh waits his paſſage o'er ;
Fierce foes inſidious intercept the ſhore :
In vain ! far ſooner all the murd'rous brood
This injur'd land ſhall fatten with their blood :
She ſpake, then touch'd him with her pow'rful wand :
The ſkin ſhrunk up, and wither'd at her hand :
A ſwift old age o'er all his members ſpread ;
A ſudden froſt was ſprinkled on his head ;
Nor longer in the heavy eye-ball ſhin'd
The glance divine, forth beaming from the mind.
His robe, with ſpots indelible beſmear,
In rags diſhoneſt flutters with the air :
A ſtag's torn hide is lapt around his reins ;
A rugged ſtaff his trembling hand ſuſtains ;
And at his ſide a wretched ſcrip was hung,
Wide-patch'd, and knotted to a twiſted thong.
So look'd the chief, ſo mov'd ! to mortal eyes
Object uncouth ! a man of miſeries !

v. 502. *His robe, with ſpots indelible beſmear.*] I doubt not but Homer draws after the life. We have the whole equipage and accoutrements of a beggar, yet ſo drawn by Homer, as even to retain a nobleneſs and dignity; let any perſon read the deſcription, and he will be convinced of it ; what can be more lofty and ſonorous than this verſe ?

Ῥωγαλέα, ῥυπόωντα κακῷ μεμορυγμένα καπνῷ.

It is no humility to ſay that a tranſlator muſt fall ſhort of the original in ſuch paſſages : the Greek language has words noble and ſounding to expreſs all ſubjects, which are wanting in our tongue ; all that is to be expected is to keep the diction from appearing mean or ridiculous They are greatly miſtaken who impute this diſguiſe of Ulyſſes in the form of a beggar, as a fault to Homer ; there is nothing either abſurd or mean in it ; for the way to make a king undiſcoverable, is to dreſs him as unlike himſelf as poſſible. David counterfeited madneſs, as Ulyſſes poverty, and neither of them ought to lie under any imputation ; it is eaſy to vindicate Homer, from the diſguiſe of the greateſt perſons and generals in hiſtory, upon the like emergencies ; but there is no occaſion for it.

While Pallas, cleaving the wide fields of air,
To Sparta flies, Telemachus her care.

v. 510. *While Pallas, cleaving the wide fields of air,*
To Sparta flies, ——]

Homer is now preparing to turn the relation from Ulyſſes to Telemachus, whom we left at Sparta with Menelaus in the fourth book of the Odyſſey. He has been long out of ſight, and we have heard of none of his actions; Telemachus is not the hero of the poem: he is only an under agent, and conſequently the poet was at liberty to omit any or all of his adventures, unleſs ſuch as have a neceſſary connection with the ſtory of the Odyſſey, and contribute to the re-eſtabliſhment of Ulyſſes; by this method likewiſe Homer gives variety to his poetry, and breaks or gathers up the thread of it, as it tends to diverſify the whole: we may conſider an epic poem as a ſpacious garden, where there are to be different walks and views, leſt the eye ſhould be tired with too great a regularity and uniformity: the chief avenue ought to be the moſt ample and noble, but theſe ſhould be by-walks to retire into ſometimes for our eaſe and refreſhment. The poet thus gives us ſeveral openings to draw us forward with pleaſure; and though the great event of the poem be chiefly in view, yet he ſometimes leads us aſide into other ſhort paſſages which end in it again, and brings us with pleaſure to the concluſion of it. Thus, for inſtance, Homer begins with the ſtory of Telemachus and the ſuitors; then he leaves them awhile, and more largely lays before us the adventures of Ulyſſes, the hero of his poem; when he has ſatisfied the curioſity of the reader by a full narration of what belongs to him, he returns to Telemachus and the ſuitors: at length he unites the two ſtories, and proceeds directly to the end of the Odyſſey. Thus, all the collateral and indirect paſſages fall into one center, and main point of view. The eye is continually entertained with ſome new object, and we paſs on from incident to incident, not only without fatigue, but with pleaſure and admiration.

THE ODYSSEY.

*BOOK XIV.

THE ARGUMENT.

The converſation with Eumæus.

Ulyſſes arrives in diſguiſe at the houſe of Eumæus, where he is received, entertained, and lodged, with the utmoſt hoſpitality. The ſeveral diſcourſes of that faithful old ſervant, with the feigned ſtory told by Ulyſſes to conceal himſelf, and other converſations on various ſubjects, take up this entire book.

BUT he, deep muſing, o'er the mountains ſtray'd
Thro' mazy thickets of the woodland ſhade,
And cavern'd ways, the ſhaggy coaſt along,
With cliffs and nodding foreſts over-hung.

* We ſee in this book the character of a faithful, wiſe, benevolent old man in Eumæus; one happily innocent, unambitious, and wholly employed in rural affairs. The whole interview between Ulyſſes and Eumæus has fallen into ridicule; Eumæus has been judged to be of the ſame rank and condition with our modern ſwine-herds. But herds and flocks were then kept and attended by the ſons of kings; thus Paris watched the flocks of Priam in the groves of Ida, and the ſame is ſaid of many of the heroes in the Iliad; theſe offices were places of dignity, and filled by perſons of birth; and ſuch was Eumæus, deſcended from a prince, named Cteſius: thus the maſter of the houſe is a poſt of honour in modern ages.

It is in poetry, as in painting; where the artiſt does not confine himſelf to draw only gods or heroes, palaces and princes; but he frequently employs his pencil in repreſenting landſchapes, rural ſcenes, groves, cottages, and ſhepherds tending their flocks.

Eumæus at his ſilvan lodge he ſought,
A faithful ſervant, and without a fault.

There is a paſſage in Monſieur Boileau's reflections upon Longinus, which fully vindicates all the places of Homer that have been cenſured as low and too familiar. "There is nothing (obſerves that "author) that more diſgraces a compoſition than the uſe of vulgar "words: a mean thought expreſſed in noble terms, is generally more "taking than a noble thought debaſed by mean terms: the reaſon is, "every perſon cannot judge of the juſtneſs and ſtrength of a thought, "but there are very few, eſpecially in living languages, who are "not ſhocked at mean words: and yet almoſt all writers fall into "this fault. Longinus accuſes Herodotus, the moſt polite of all the "Greek hiſtorians, of this defect; and Livy, Salluſt, and Virgil, "have fallen under the ſame imputation. Is it not then very ſurpriſing that no reproach upon this account has fallen upon Homer? "eſpecially, though he has compoſed two large poems, and though "no author has deſcended more frequently into the detail of little "particularities; yet he never uſes terms which are not noble, or "if he uſes humble words or phraſes, it is with ſo much art, that, "as Dionyſius Halicarnaſſus obſerves, they become noble and harmonious. We may learn from hence the ignorance of thoſe modern critics, who judge of the Greek without the knowledge of it; "and having never read Homer but in low and inelegant tranſlations "impute the meanneſſes of the tranſlator to the poet. Beſides, the "words of different languages are not exactly correſpondent, and it "often happens, that an expreſſion which is noble in the Greek, "cannot be rendered in a verſion but by words that are either mean "in the ſound or uſage. Thus aſs, and aſinus in Latin, are mean "to the laſt degree; though ὄνος in the Greek be uſed in the moſt "magnificent deſcriptions, and has nothing mean in it; in like "manner the terms hogherd and cowkeeper, are not to be uſed in "our poetry; but there are no finer words in the Greek language "than βάκολος and βουκόλος: and Virgil, who intitles his Eclogues "Bucolics in the Roman tongue, would have been aſhamed to call "them in our language The Dialogues of Cowkeepers."

Homer himſelf convinces us of the truth of this obſervation; nay, one would imagine that he intended induſtriouſly to force it upon our notice; for he frequently calls Eumæus Ὀρχαμος ἀνδρῶν, or "prince of men;" and his common epithet is δῖος, or δῖος ὑφορβός. Homer would not have applied theſe appellations to him, if he had not been a perſon of dignity; it being the ſame title that he beſtows upon his greateſt heroes, Ulyſſes or Achilles.

v. 1. *But he, deep muſing, o'er the mountain ſtray'd.*] I ſhall tranſcribe the obſervation of Dionyſius Halicarnaſſus upon the firſt verſes in this book: the ſame method, remarks that author, makes both proſe and verſe beautiful; which conſiſts in theſe three things,

Ulyſſes found him buſied, as he ſat
Before the threſhold of his ruſtic gate ;

the judicious coaptation and ranging of the words, the poſition of the members and parts of the verſe, and the various meaſure of the periods. Whoever would write elegantly, muſt have regard to the different turn and juncture of every period, there muſt be proper diſtances and pauſes ; every verſe muſt be a complete ſentence, but broken and interrupted, and the parts made unequal, ſome longer, ſome ſhorter, to give a variety of cadence to it. Neither the turn of the parts of the verſe, nor the length, ought to be alike. This is abſolutely neceſſary : for the epic or heroic verſe is of a fixed determinate length, and we cannot, as in the lyric, make one longer, and another ſhorter ; therefore to avoid an identity of cadence, and a perpetual return of the ſame periods, it is requiſite to contract, lengthen, and interrupt the pauſe and ſtructure of the members of the verſes, to create an harmonious inequality, and out of a fixed number of ſyllables to raiſe a perpetual diverſity. For inſtance,

Αὐτὰρ ὃ ἐκ λιμένος προσέβη τρηχεῖαν ἀταρπόν.

Here one line makes one ſentence ; the next is ſhorter

Χῶρον ἄν' ὑλήεντα ———

The next is ſtill ſhorter,

——δι' ἄκριας ——

The next ſentence compoſes two hemiſtichs,

————Ἣ οἱ Ἀθήνη
Πέφραδε δῖον ὑφορβὸν———

and is entirely unlike any of the preceding periods.

————Ὃ οἱ βιότιο μάλιστα
Κήδετο οἰκήων ὃς κτήσατο δῖος Ὀδυσσεύς.

Here again the ſentence is not finiſhed with the former verſe but breaks into the fourth line ; and leſt we ſhould be out of breath with the length of the ſentence, the period and the verſe conclude together at the end of it.

Then Homer begins a new ſentence, and makes it pauſe differently from any of the former.

Τὸν δ' ἀρ' ἐνὶ προδρόμῳ εὗρ' ἥμενον ——

Then he adds,

——Ἔνθά οἱ αὐλὴ
Ὑψηλὴ δέδμητο———

Around, the manſion in a circle ſhone:
A rural portico of rugged ſtone:
(In abſence of his lord, with honeſt toil
His own induſtrious hands had rais'd the pile)
The wall was ſtone from neighb'ring quarries borne,
Encircled with a fence of native thorn,
And ſtrong with pales, by many a weary ſtroke
Of ſtubborn labour hewn from heart of oak;
Frequent and thick. Within the ſpace were rear'd
Twelve ample cells, the lodgement of his herd.
Full fifty pregnant females each contain'd;
The males without (a ſmaller race) remain'd;
Doom'd to ſupply the ſuitors waſteful feaſt,
A ſtock by daily luxury decreaſt;

This is perfectly unequal to the foregoing period, and the pauſe of the ſentence is carried forward into the ſecond verſe; and what then follows is neither diſtinguiſhed by the pauſes nor parts periodically, but almoſt at every word there is a ſtop.

——— Περισκέπλω ἐνὶ χώρῳ,
Καλήτε, μεγάληε.

No doubt but Homer was a perfect maſter of numbers; a man can no more be a poet than a muſician, without a good ear, as we uſually expreſs it. It is true, that verſification is but the mechaniſm of poetry, but it ſets off good ſenſe to the beſt advantage; it is a colouring that enlivens the portrait, and makes even a beauty more agreeable.

I will conclude this note, with obſerving what Mr. Dryden ſays of theſe two lines of Cowper's Hill:

Tho' deep, yet clear, tho' gentle, yet not dull,
Strong without rage, without o'erflowing full.

"There are few, (ſays he) who make verſes, that have obſerved "the ſweetneſs of theſe lines, and fewer who can find the reaſon of "it." But I believe no one will be at a loſs to ſolve the difficulty who conſiders this obſervation of Dionyſius: and I doubt not but the chief ſweetneſs ariſes from the judicious and harmonious pauſes of the ſeveral periods of the verſes; not to mention the happy choice of the words, in which there is ſcarce one rough conſonant, many liquids, and thoſe liquids ſoftened with a multitude of vowels.

Now ſcarce four hundred left. Theſe to defend,
Four ſavage dogs, a watchful guard, attend.
Here ſat Eumæus, and his cares apply'd
To form ſtrong buſkins of well-ſeaſon'd hide.

v. 25. *Here ſat Eumæus, and his cares apply'd*, &c.] I doubt not but this employment of Eumæus has been another cauſe of the mean character that has been formed of his condition: but this miſtake ariſes from our judging of the dignity of men from the employments they followed three thouſand years paſt, by the notions we have of thoſe employments at preſent; and becauſe they are nowonly the occupation of the vulgar, we imagine that they were ſo formerly: kings and princes in the earlier ages of the world laboured in arts and occupations, and were above nothing that tended to promote the conveniences of life; they performed that with their own hands, which we now perform by thoſe of our ſervants: if this were not ſo, the cookery of Achilles in the Iliad would equally diſparage that hero, as this employment would diſgrace Eumæus in the Odyſſey: arts were then in their infancy, and were honourable to the practiſers: thus Ulyſſes builds a veſſel with his own hands, as ſkilfully as a ſhipwright.

Beſides, even at this day arts are in high eſteem in the oriental world, and are practiſed by the greateſt perſonages. Every man in Turkey is of ſome trade; ſultan Achmet was a maker of ivory rings, which the Turks wear upon their thumbs when they ſhoot their arrows, and in this occupation he worked ſeveral hours daily; and another of their emperors was depoſed, becauſe he refuſed to work in his occupation.

It muſt be confeſſed that our tranſlations have contributed to give thoſe who are unacquainted with the Greek, a mean idea of Eumæus. This place is thus rendered by two of his tranſlators.

Himſelf there ſat ord'ring a pair of brogues,
Of a py'd bullock's ſkin——

Himſelf was leather to his foot applying,
Made of a good cow-hide well coloured.

Whereas Homer is as lofty and harmonious, as theſe are flat and inelegant.

Αὐτὸς δ' ἀμφὶ ποδεσσιν ἑοῖς ἀράρισκε πέδιλα
Τάμνων δέρμα βόειον, ἐϋχροές.

It is true, a tranſlator in ſuch places as theſe has an hard taſk; a language like the Greek, which is always flowing, muſical, and ſonorous, is very difficult to be imitated in other tongues, eſpecially where the correſponding words are not equally ſignificant and graceful.

Of four aſſiſtants who his labour ſhare
Three now were abſent on the rural care;
The fourth drove victims to the ſuitor train:
But he, of antient faith, a ſimple ſwain,
Sigh'd, while he furniſh'd the luxurious board,
And weary'd heav'n with wiſhes for his lord.
Soon as Ulyſſes near th' encloſure drew,
With open mouths the furious maſtives flew:
Down ſat the ſage; and cautious to withſtand,
Let fall th' offenſive truncheon from his hand.

In ſhort, the reader is to conſider this whole deſcription as a true picture of antient life; and then he will not fail of the pleaſure of knowing how the great men of antient times paſſed their lives, and how thoſe heroes, who performed ſuch noble parts on the public ſtage of life, acted in private when withdrawn from notice and obſervation. Thoſe ages retained an univerſal ſimplicity of manners: Telemachus and Eumæus have both dogs for their attendants; nay, and in later times, before luxury prevailed among the Romans, we read of a dictator brought from the plough, to lead the braveſt ſoldiers in the world to conquer it.

v. 35. *Down ſat the ſage; and cautious to withſtand,*
Let fall th' offenſive truncheon from his hand.]

Homer has been cenſured for repreſenting his hero unworthily: is it probable that he who had met whole armies in battle, ſhould now throw away his ſtaff out of fear of a dog? That he ſhould abandon his defence by caſting himſelf on the ground, and leave himſelf to his mercy? But Euſtathius fully vindicates Ulyſſes. It is a natural defence to avert the fury of a dog, to caſt away our weapons, to ſhew that we intend him no violence. Pliny has the like obſervation in the eighth book of his Natural Hiſtory: "Impetus canum & fævitia mitigatur ab homine humi confidente."

All that Homer ſays of the dogs, is imitated by Theocritus, Idyll. xxv. v. 68.

Θεσπέσιον δ' ὑλάοντες ἐπέδραμον ἄλλοθεν ἄλλος
Τὰς μὲν ὄγε λάεσσιν ἀπὸ χθονὸς ὅσσον ἀείρων
Φεύγεμεν ἄψ' ὀπίσω δειδίσσετο, &c.

What Homer ſpeaks of Ulyſſes, Theocritus applies to Hercules; a demonſtration that he thought it to be a picture of nature, and therefore inſerted it in that heroic Idyllium.

Sudden, the maſter runs ; aloud he calls ;
And from his haſty hand the leather falls ;
With ſhow'rs of ſtones he drives them far away ;
The ſcatt'ring dogs around at diſtance bay.
Unhappy ſtranger ! (thus the faithful ſwain
Began with accent gracious and humane)

v. 37. *Sudden, the maſter runs*, &c.] This is thought to be an adventure that really happened to the poet himſelf ; it is related in the life of Homer aſcribed to Herodotus. Theſtorides having perſuaded Homer to permit him to tranſcribe his verſes, he immediately removed to Chios, and proclaimed himſelf the author. Homer being informed of it, ſet ſail for Chios, and landing near it, he was in danger of being torn in pieces by the dogs of Glaucus, who protected him, and received him hoſpitably : the poet in return laboured to reward his kindneſs, by relating to him the moſt curious of his adventures that had happened in the courſe of his voyages. When therefore (adds Dacier) we ſee Ulyſſes entertained by Eumæus, we have the ſatiſfaction of imagining we ſee Homer himſelf in diſcourſe with his courteous friend Glaucus.

v. 41.——*thus the faithful ſwain*, &c.] The words in the Greek are δῖος ἱφορβὸς, literally rendered, "the divine ſwine-herd," which are burleſque in modern languages, and would have been no leſs in Greek, if the perſon of Eumæus had not been honourable, and his office a ſtation of dignity: for the ſole reaſon why ſuch a tranſlation would now be ridiculous, is becauſe ſuch employments are now fallen into contempt. Let any perſon aſk this queſtion, Would Homer have applied the epithet divine to a modern ſwineherd ? if he would not, it is an evidence that Eumæus was a man of conſequence, and his poſt a place of honour ; otherwiſe Homer would have been guilty of burleſquing his own poetry.

Dacier very well remarks, that the words Eumæus here ſpeaks, and indeed his whole converſation, ſhew him to be a perſon of a good education, and of noble and pious ſentiments ; he diſcovers a natural and flowing eloquence, and appears to be a man of great humanity and wiſdom.

There is a peculiarity in Homer's manner of apoſtrophizing Eumæus, and ſpeaking of him in the ſecond perſon ; it is generally applied by that poet only to men of account and diſtinction, and by it the poet, as it were, addreſſes them with reſpect ; thus in the Iliad he introduces Menelaus.

Οὐδὲ σέθεν, Μενέλαε, θεοὶ ἐλάθονῖο,
——Τόνδε προσέφης Πατρόκλε.

This enlivens the diction, and awakens the attention of the reader. Euſtathius obſerves that Eumæus is the only perſon of whom

What ſorrow had been mine, if at my gate
Thy rev'rend age had met a ſhameful fate?
Enough of woes already have I known;
Enough my maſter's ſorrows and my own.
While here, (ungrateful taſk!) his herds I feed,
Ordain'd for lawleſs rioters to bleed;
Perhaps ſupported at another's board,
Far from his country roams my hapleſs lord!
Or ſigh'd in exile forth his lateſt breath,
Now covered with th' eternal ſhade of death!
But enter this my homely roof, and ſee
Our woods not void of hoſpitality.
Then tell me whence thou art? and what the ſhare
Of woes and wand'rings thou wert born to bear?
He ſaid, and ſeconded the kind requeſt,
With friendly ſtep precedes his unknown gueſt.
A ſhaggy goat's ſoft hide beneath him ſpread,
And with freſh ruſhes heap'd an ample bed:
Joy touch'd the hero's tender ſoul, to find
So juſt reception from a heart ſo kind:
And oh, ye gods! with all your bleſſings grace
(He thus broke forth) this friend of human race!
The ſwain reply'd. It never was our guiſe
To ſlight the poor, or aught humane deſpiſe;
For Jove unfolds our hoſpitable door,
'Tis Jove that ſends the ſtranger and the poor.

Homer thus ſpeaks in the whole Odyſſey: no doubt (continues that author) he does it out of love of this benevolent old ſervant of Ulyſſes, and to honour and diſtinguiſh his fidelity.

v. 66. *To ſlight the poor, or aught humane deſpiſe;*
For Jove unfolds our hoſpitable door,
'Tis Jove that ſends the ſtranger and the poor.]

This paſſage contains an admirable lecture of morality and humanity. The perſon who beſt underſtood the beauty of it, and beſt explained the precepts it comprehends, was Epictetus, from whom Monſieur Dacier furniſhes us with this explication from Arrian: "Keep (ſays that author) continually in thy memory,

Little alas! is all the good I can;
A man oppreſt, dependant, yet a man:
Accept ſuch treatment as a ſwain affords,
Slave to the inſolence of youthful lords!
Far hence is by unequal gods remov'd
That man of bounties, loving and belov'd!
To whom whate'er his ſlave enjoys is ow'd,
And more, had fate allow'd, had been beſtow'd:

" what Eumæus ſpeaks in Homer to the diſguiſed Ulyſſes." " O " friend, it is unlawful to deſpiſe the ſtranger; ſpeak thus to thy " brother, father, and neighbour: it is my duty to uſe you with " benevolence, tho' your circumſtances were meaner than they are; " for you come from God." Here we ſee Epictetus borrowing his morality from Homer; and philoſophy embelliſhed with the ornaments of poetry. Indeed there is ſcarce any writer of name among all the antients that has not been obliged to Homer, whether moraliſts, poets, philoſophers, or legiſlators.

v. 75. *To whom whate'er his ſlave enjoys is ow'd,*
And more, had fate allow'd,———]

This paſſage has been greatly miſtaken by almoſt all who have tranſlated Homer: the words at firſt view ſeem to imply that Ulyſſes had given Eumæus a wife, a houſe, and an inheritance; but this is not the meaning. The words are thus to be rendered; " Ulyſſes (ſays Eu- " mæus) greatly loved me, and gave me a poſſeſſion, and ſuch things " as an indulgent maſter gives a faithful ſervant; namely, a wife, inheritance, and an houſe." Theſe gifts are to be applied to Ἄναξ εὔθυμος, and not to Ulyſſes; and the ſentence means, that it is the cuſtom of good kings in that manner to reward their faithful ſervants. It is very evident from Homer, that Ulyſſes had not yet given a wife to Eumæus; for he promiſes him and Philætius all theſe rewards, lib. xxi. of the Odyſſey.

Ἄξομαι ἀμφοτέροις ἀλόχους, καὶ κτήματ' ὀπάσσω,
Οἰκία τ' ἐγγὺς ἐμεῖο τετυγμένα, καί μοι ἔπειτα
Τηλεμάχῳ ἑτάρῳ τε, κασιγνήτω τε ἔσεσθον.

It appears therefore that Eumæus was not married, and therefore this whole period is to be applied to the word ἄναξ, and not to Ulyſſes. Euſtathius.

I will only add, that in the above-mentioned verſes Ulyſſes promiſes that Eumæus ſhall be the companion and brother of Telemachus; an inſtance, that he was not a vulgar perſon whom Ulyſſes thus honours, by making him allied to the royal family.

But fate condemn'd him to a foreign ſhore;
Much have I ſorrow'd, but my maſter more.
Now cold he lies, to death's embrace reſign'd:
Ah periſh Helen! periſh all her kind!
For whoſe curs'd cauſe, in Agamemnon's name,
He trod ſo fatally the paths of fame.
His veſt ſuccinct then girding round his waſte,
Forth ruſh'd the ſwain with hoſpitable haſte,
Straight to the lodgments of his herd he run,
Where the fat porkers ſlept beneath the ſun;
Of two, his cutlace lanch'd the ſpouting blood;
Theſe quarter'd, ſindg'd, and fix'd on forks of wood,
All haſty on the hiſſing coals he threw;
And ſmoking back the taſteful viands drew,
Broachers and all; then on the board diſplay'd
The ready meal, before Ulyſſes laid
With flour imbrown'd; next mingled wine yet new,
And luſcious as the bees nectareous dew:
Then ſat companion of the friendly feaſt,
With open look; and thus beſpoke his gueſt.
Take with free welcome what our hands prepare,
Such food as falls to ſimple ſervants ſhare;
The beſt our lords conſume; thoſe thoughtleſs peers,
Rich without bounty, guilty without fears!
Yet ſure the gods their impious acts deteſt,
And honour juſtice and the righteous breaſt.
Pirates and conquerors, of harden'd mind,
The foes of peace, and ſcourges of mankind,
To whom offending men are made a prey
When Jove in vengeance gives a land away;

v. 93. *With flour imbrown'd*——] We find here a cuſtom of antiquity: this flour was made of parched corn; when the antients fed upon any thing that had not been offered in ſacrifice, they ſprinkled it with flour, which was uſed inſtead of the hallowed barley, with which they conſecrated their victims. I doubt not, (ſince ſome honours were paid to the gods in all feaſts) but that this ſprinkling of flour by Eumæus was an act of religion. Dacier.

Ev'n theſe, when of their ill-got ſpoils poſſeſs'd,
Find ſure tormentors in the guilty breaſt;
Some voice of God cloſe whiſp'ring from within,
"Wretch! this is villany, and this is ſin."
But theſe, no doubt, ſome oracle explore,
That tells, the great Ulyſſes is no more.
Hence ſprings their confidence, and from our ſighs
Their rapine ſtrengthens, and their riots riſe:
Conſtant as Jove the night and day beſtows,
Bleeds a whole hecatomb, a vintage flows.
None match'd this hero's wealth, of all who reign
O'er the fair iſlands of the neighb'ring main.
Nor all the monarchs whoſe far dreaded ſway
The wide extended-continents obey:
Firſt, on the main-land, of Ulyſſes' breed
Twelve herds, twelve flocks, on ocean's margin feed;

v. 122. *Twelve herds, twelve flocks,* &c.] I have already remarked, that Ulyſſes was a wealthy king, and this place is an inſtance of it. He is maſter of twelve herds of oxen, which probably amounted to fourteen thouſand four hundred head; for if we count the herds by the ſame way of computation as the droves of ſwine, they will make that number, each drove conſiſting of twelve hundred: for though Homer mentions but three hundred and ſixty boars, yet he tells us, the reaſon why they were inferior to the females was becauſe of the luxury of the ſuitors. If this be allowed, then he had likewiſe the ſame number of ſheep, and as many hogs: for Eumæus had the charge only of one herd, eleven more were under the care of other officers: Ulyſſes likewiſe had thirteen thouſand two hundred goats. This will appear to be a true calculation from the words of Homer, who tells us, that twenty of the greateſt heroes of the age were not ſo wealthy as Ulyſſes.

The old poets and hiſtorians, to expreſs a perſon of great riches, gave him the epithet of πολυμήλου, πολυαρνῶν, or πολύρρηνος; that is, "a perſon that had a great number of ſheep or cattle, or a "perſon of great wealth." This is likewiſe evident from the holy ſcriptures: David had his officers, like Ulyſſes, to attend his flocks and herds: thus 1 Chron. xxvii Jehonathan was ſet over his treaſures in the field, cities and villages; Shimei over his vineyards; Zabdi over his wines; Baal-hanan over his olive-trees, and Joaſh over his oil: he had herdſmen that had charge over his cattle, ſheep, camels, and aſſes. It was by cattle that the antient kings enriched themſelves from the earlieſt ages: thus no leſs a perſon

As many ſtalls for ſhaggy goats are rear'd ;
As many lodgments for the tuſky herd ;
Thoſe foreign keepers guard: and here are ſeen
Twelve herds of goats that graze our utmoſt green ;
To native paſtors is their charge aſſign'd ;
And mine the care to feed the briſtly kind :
Each day the fatteſt bleeds of either herd,
All to the ſuitors waſteful board preferr'd.
Thus he, benevolent; his unknown gueſt
With hunger keen devours the ſav'ry feaſt ;
While ſchemes of vengeance ripen in his breaſt.
Silent and thoughtful while the board he ey'd,
Eumæus pours on high the purple tide ;
The king with ſmiling looks his joy expreſt,
And thus the kind inviting hoſt addreſt,
Say now, what man is he, the man deplor'd,
So rich, ſo potent, whom you ſtyle your lord ?
Late with ſuch affluence and poſſeſſions bleſt,
And now in honour's glorious bed at reſt.
Whoever was the warriour, he muſt be
To fame no ſtranger, nor perhaps to me ;
Who (ſo the gods, and ſo the fates ordain'd)
Have wander'd many a ſea, and many a land.
Small is the faith, the prince and queen aſcribe
(Reply'd Eumæus) to the wand'ring tribe.
For needy ſtrangers ſtill to flatt'ry fly,
And want too oft' betrays the tongue to lye.
Each vagrant traveller that touches here,
Deludes with fallacies the royal ear,

than Pharaoh, a powerful king of Ægypt, gave Joſeph leave to appoint his brethren to be rulers over his cattle ; and we read in all the Greek poets, that the wealth of kings originally conſiſted in herds and flocks. They loſe much of the pleaſure of Homer who read him only as a poet : he gives us an exact image of antient life, their manners, cuſtoms, laws, and politics ; and it muſt double our ſatisfaction, when we conſider that in reading Homer we are reading the moſt antient author in the world, except the great lawgiver Moſes.

To dear remembrance makes his image riſe,
And calls the ſpringing ſorrows from her eyes.
Such thou may'ſt be. But he whoſe name you crave
Moulders in earth, or welters on the wave,
Or food for fiſh, or dogs, his reliques lie,
Or torn by birds are ſcatter'd through the ſky.
So periſh'd he: and left (for ever loſt)
Much woe to all, but ſure to me the moſt.
So mild a maſter never ſhall I find:
Leſs dear the parents whom I left behind,
Leſs ſoft my mother, leſs my father kind.
Not with ſuch tranſport wou'd my eyes run o'er
Again to hail them in their native ſhore;
As lov'd Ulyſſes once more to embrace
Reſtor'd and breathing in his natal place.
That name, for ever dread, yet ever dear,
Ev'n in his abſence I pronounce with fear:
In my reſpect, he bears a prince's part;
But lives a very brother, in my heart.

Thus ſpoke the faithful ſwain, and thus rejoin'd
The maſter of his grief, the man of patient mind.
Ulyſſes, friend! ſhall view his old abodes,
(Diſtruſtful as thou art) nor doubt the gods.

v. 167. *That name, for ever dread,* &c.] Euſtathius excellently explains the ſentiment of Eumæus, which is full of tenderneſs and humanity. I will not call Ulyſſes, cries Eumæus, by the name of Ulyſſes, for from ſtrangers he receives that appellation; I will not call him my maſter, for as ſuch he never was towards me; I will then call him brother, for he always uſed me with the tenderneſs of a brother. Ἥθεος properly ſignifies an elder brother.

What I would further obſerve is, the wonderful art of Homer in exalting the character of his hero: he is the braveſt and the beſt of men, good in every circumſtance of life: valiant in war, patient in adverſity, a kind father, huſband, and maſter, as well as a mild and merciful king: by this conduct the poet deeply engages our affections in the good or ill fortune of the hero: he makes himſelf maſter of our paſſions, and we rejoice or grieve at his ſucceſs or calamity through the whole Odyſſey.

Nor ſpeak I raſhly, but with faith averr'd,
And what I ſpeak atteſting heav'n has heard.
If ſo, a cloak and veſture be my meed;
'Till his return, no title ſhall I plead,
Tho' certain be my news, and great my need.
Whom want itſelf can force untruths to tell,
My ſoul deteſts him as the gates of hell.
Thou firſt be witneſs, hoſpitable Jove!
And ev'ry god inſpiring ſocial love!
And witneſs ev'ry houſhold pow'r that waits
Guard of theſe fires, and angel of theſe gates!
Ere the next moon increaſe, or this decay,
His antient realms Ulyſſes ſhall ſurvey,

v. 186. *Ere the next moon increaſe, or this decay.*] Theſe verſes have been thought to be uſed ænigmatically by Ulyſſes.

Τῷ δ' αὐτῷ λυκάβαντος ἐλεύσεσθαι ἐνιαυτὸν Ὀδυσσεύς,
Τῷ μὲν φθίνοντος μηνὸς, τῷ δ' ἱσταμένοιο.

In the former verſe Euſtathius tells us there is a various reading, and judges that it ought to be written τῷ δ' αὖ τῷ, and not τῷ δ' αὐτῷ; and it muſt be allowed that the repetition of τῷ gives a greater emphaſis to the words, and agrees better with the vehemence of the ſpeaker in making his aſſeveration.

The latter verſe in the obvious ſenſe ſeems to mean that Ulyſſes would return in the ſpace of a month, and ſo Eumæus underſtood it; but in reality it means in the compaſs of a day. Solon was the firſt who diſcovered the latent ſenſe of it, as Plutarch informs us: Solon, "ſays that author, obſerving the inequality of the months, and that "the moon neither agreed with the riſing or ſetting of the ſun, but "that often in the ſame day ſhe overtook and went before it, named "that ſame day ἕνη καὶ νέα, "the old and new moon;" and allotted that "part of the day that preceded the conjunction, to the old moon, and "the other part of it to the new; from hence we may judge that he "was the firſt that comprehended the ſenſe of this verſe of Homer.

Τῷ μὲν φθίνοντος μηνὸς, τῷ δ' ἱσταμένοιο.

"Accordingly he named the following day, "the day of the new "moon." Ulyſſes then means that he will return on the laſt day "of the month, for on that day the moon is both old and new; "that is, ſhe finiſhes one month, and begins another." This is taken from the life of Solon; but whether the obvious ſenſe in which Eumæus is ſuppoſed to underſtand it, or the latent meaning of Solon be preferable, is ſubmitted to the reader's judgment; I

In blood and duſt each proud oppreſſor mourn,
And the loſt glories of his houſe return.
Nor ſhall that meed be thine, nor ever more
Shall lov'd Ulyſſes hail this happy ſhore,
(Reply'd Eumæus:) to the preſent hour
Now turn thy thought, and joys within our pow'r.
From ſad reflection let my ſoul repoſe;
The name of him awakes a thouſand woes.
But guard him, gods! and to theſe arms reſtore!
Not his true conſort can deſire him more;
Not old Laertes, broken with deſpair;
Not young Telemachus, his blooming heir.
Alas, Telemachus! my ſorrows flow
Afreſh for thee, my ſecond cauſe of woe!
Like ſome fair plant ſet by a heav'nly hand,
He grew, he flouriſh'd, and he bleſt the land;
In all the youth his father's image ſhin'd,
Bright in his perſon, brighter in his mind.
What man, or god, deceiv'd his better ſenſe,
Far on the ſwelling ſeas to wander hence?
To diſtant Pylos hapleſs is he gone,
To ſeek his father's fate, and find his own!
For traitors wait his way, with dire deſign
To end at once the great Arceſian line.
But let us leave him to their wills above;
The fates of men are in the hand of Jove.
And now, my venerable gueſt! declare
Your name, your parents, and your native air:

confeſs I ſee no occaſion to have recourſe to that myſterious explication: what Ulyſſes intended was to certify Eumæus, that Ulyſſes would aſſuredly return very ſpeedily; and the verſe will have this effect, if it be underſtood literally and plainly: beſides, Ulyſſes is to continue in an abſolute diſguiſe; why then ſhould he endanger a diſcovery, by uſing an ambiguous ſentence, which might poſſibly be underſtood? But if it was ſo dark that it was utterly unintelligible to Eumæus, then it is uſed in vain, and a needleſs ambiguity.

Sincere from whence begun your courſe relate,
And to what ſhip I owe the friendly freight?
Thus he: and thus (with prompt invention bold)
The cautious chief his ready ſtory told.
On dark reſerve what better can prevail,
Or from the fluent tongue produce the tale,
Than when two friends, alone, in peaceful place
Confer, and wines and cates the table grace;
But moſt, the kind inviter's chearful face?
Thus might we ſit, with ſocial goblets crown'd
'Till the whole circle of the year goes round;
Not the whole circle of the year wou'd cloſe
My long narration of a life of woes.
But ſuch was heav'n's high will! Know then, I came
From ſacred Crete, and from a ſire of fame:

v. 229. ——*Know then, I came*
From ſacred Crete,——

This whole narration is a notable inſtance of that artful diſſimulation ſo remarkable in the character of Ulyſſes, and an evidence that Homer excellently ſuſtains it through the whole poem; for Ulyſſes appears to be πολύτροπος, as he is repreſented in the firſt line, throughout the Odyſſey. This narrative hath been both praiſed and cenſured by the critics, eſpecially by Rapin. I will lay his obſervations before the reader.

"Homer is guilty of verboſity, and a tedious prolix manner of "ſpeaking. He is the greateſt talker of all antiquity: the very "Greeks, though chargeable with an exceſs this way above all "nations, have reprehended Homer for his intemperance of words; "he is ever upon his rehearſals, and not only of the ſame words, "but of the ſame things, and conſequently is in a perpetual circle "of repetitions. It is true he always ſpeaks naturally, but then "he always ſpeaks too much: his adventures in Ægypt, which "he relates to Eumæus, are truly idle impertinent ſtories, purely "for amuſement: there is no thread in his diſcourſe, nor does it "ſeem to tend to any propoſed end, but exceeds all bounds: that "vaſt fluency of ſpeech, and thoſe mighty overflowings of fancy, "make him ſhoot beyond the mark. Hence his draughts are too "accurate, and leave nothing to be performed by the imagination "of the reader, a fault which (as Cicero obſerves) Apelles found "in the antient painters." This objection is intended only againſt the fulneſs of Homer's expreſſion, not againſt the ſubject of the

Caſtor Hylacides (that name he bore)
Belov'd and honour'd in his native ſhore ;
Bleſt in his riches, in his children more.

narration ; for Rapin in another place ſpeaking of the beauties of Homer, gives this very ſtory as an inſtance of his excellency. Theſe are his words :

" I ſhall ſay nothing of all the relations which Ulyſſes makes to " Eumæus upon his return to his country, and his wonderful ma- " nagement to bring about his re-eſtabliſhment ; that whole ſtory is " dreſt in colours ſo decent, and at the ſame time ſo noble, that an- " tiquity can hardly match any part of the narration."

If what Rapin remarks in the latter period be true, Homer will eaſily obtain a pardon for the fault of prolixity, imputed to him in the afore-mentioned objection. For who would be willing to retrench one of the moſt decent and noble narrations of antiquity merely for the length of it? But it may, perhaps, be true that this ſtory is not impertinent, but well ſuited to carry on the deſign of Ulyſſes, and conſequently tends to a propoſed end : for in this conſiſts the ſtrength of Rapin's objection.

Nothing is more evident than that the whole ſucceſs of Ulyſſes depends upon his diſguiſe, a diſcovery would be fatal to him, and at once give a ſingle unaſſiſted perſon into the power of his enemies. How then is this diſguiſe to be carried on? eſpecially when Ulyſſes in perſon is required to give an account of his own ſtory? Muſt it not be by aſſuming the name of another perſon, and giving a plauſible relation of his life, fortunes, and calamities, that brought him to a ſtrange country, where he has no acquaintance or friend? This obliges him to be circumſtantial, nothing giving a greater air of probability than deſcending to particularities, and this neceſſitates his prolixity. The whole narration is comprehended in the compaſs of one hundred and ſeventy lines ; and an epiſode of no greater length may not perhaps deſerve to be called verboſe, if compared with the length of the Odyſſey : nay, there may be a reaſon given why it ought to be of a conſiderable length : there is a pauſe in the action, while Minerva paſſes from Ithaca to Telemachus in Lacedæmon : this interval is to be filled up with ſome incident relating to Ulyſſes, untill Telemachus is prepared to return ; for his aſſiſtance is neceſſary to re-eſtabliſh the affairs of Ulyſſes. This then is a time of leiſure, and the poet fills it up with the narrations of Ulyſſes till the return of Telemachus, and conſequently there is room for a long relation. Beſides (remarks Euſtathius) Homer intereſts all men of all ages in the ſtory, by giving us pieces of true hiſtory, antient cuſtoms, and exact deſcriptions of perſons and places, inſtructive and delightful to all the world, and theſe incidents are adorned with all the embelliſhments of eloquence and poetry.

Sprung of a handmaid, from a bought embrace,
I ſhar'd his kindneſs with his lawful race:
But when that fate, which all muſt undergo,
From earth remov'd him to the ſhades below;
The large domain his greedy ſons divide,
And each was portion'd as the lots decide.
Little alas! was left my wretched ſhare,
Except a houſe, a covert from the air:
But what by niggard fortune was deny'd,
A willing widow's copious wealth ſupply'd.
My valour was my plea, a gallant mind
That, true to honour, never lagg'd behind,
(The ſex is ever to a ſoldier kind.)
Now waſting years my former ſtrength confound,
And added woes have bow'd me to the ground;
Yet by the ſtubble you may gueſs the grain,
And mark the ruins of no vulgar man.
Me, Pallas gave to lead the martial ſtorm,
And the fair ranks of battle to deform:
Me, Mars inſpir'd to turn the foe to flight,
And tempt the ſecret ambuſh of the night.
Let ghaſtly death in all its forms appear,
I ſaw him not; it was not mine to fear.
Before the reſt I rais'd my ready ſteel;
The firſt I met, he yielded, or he fell.

v. 234 *Sprung of a handmaid,*——] Ulyſſes ſays he was the ſon of a concubine: this was not a matter of diſgrace among the antients, concubinage being allowed by the laws.

The ſons caſt lots for their patrimony, an evidence that this was the practiſe of the antient Greeks. Hence an inheritance had the name κληρονομία, that is, from the lots; parents put it to the deciſion of the lot, to avoid the envy and imputation of partiality in the diſtribution of their eſtates. It has been judged that the poet writes according to the Athenian laws, at leaſt this cuſtom prevailed in the days of Solon; for he forbad parents who had ſeveral legitimate ſons to make a will, but ordained that all the legitimate ſons ſhould have an equal ſhare of their father's effects. Euſtathius.

But works of peace my ſoul diſdain'd to bear,
The rural labour, or domeſtic care.
To raiſe the maſt, the miſſile dart to wing,
And ſend ſwift arrows from the bounding ſtring,
Were arts the gods made grateful to my mind;
Thoſe gods, who turn (to various ends deſign'd)
The various thoughts and talents of mankind.
Before the Grecians touch'd the Trojan plain,
Nine times commander or by land or main,
In foreign fields I ſpread my glory far,
Great in the praiſe, rich in the ſpoils of war:
Thence charg'd with riches, as increas'd in fame,
To Crete return'd, an honourable name.
But when great Jove that direful war decreed,
Which rous'd all Greece, and made the mighty bleed;
Our ſtates myſelf and Idomen employ
To lead their fleets, and carry death to Troy.
Nine years we warr'd; the tenth ſaw Ilion fall;
Homeward we ſail'd, but heav'n diſpers'd us all.
One only month my wife enjoy'd my ſtay;
So will'd the god who gives and takes away.

v. 259. ——— *My ſoul diſdain'd to bear,*
The rural labour, ———]

Plutarch, in his compariſon of Ariſtides and Cato, cites theſe verſes,

——ἔρξον δὲ μοι ἃ φίλον ἔσκεν.
Οὐδ' οἰκωφελίη, &c.

and tells us, that they who neglect their private and domeſtic concerns, uſually draw their ſubſiſtence from violence and rapine. This is certainly a truth: men are apt to ſupply their wants, occaſioned by idleneſs, by plunder and injuſtice: but it is as certain that no reflection is intended to be caſt upon this way of living by Ulyſſes, for in his age piracy was not only allowable, but glorious; and ſudden inroads and incurſions were practiſed by the greateſt heroes. Homer therefore only intends to ſhew that the diſpoſition of Ulyſſes inclined him to purſue the more dangerous, but more glorious, way of living by war, than the more lucrative, but more ſecure method of life, by agriculture and huſbandry.

Nine ſhips I mann'd, equipp'd with ready ſtores,
Intent to voyage to th' Ægyptian ſhores;
In feaſt and ſacrifice my choſen train
Six days conſum'd; the ſeventh we plough'd the main.
Crete's ample fields diminiſh to our eye;
Before the Boreal blaſts the veſſels fly;
Safe thro' the level ſeas we ſweep our way;
The ſteer-man governs, and the ſhips obey.
The fifth fair morn we ſtem th' Ægyptian tide,
And tilting o'er the bay the veſſels ride:
To anchor there my fellows I command,
And ſpies commiſſion to explore the land.
But ſway'd by luſt of gain, and headlong will,
The coaſts they ravage, and the natives kill.
The ſpreading clamour to their city flies,
And horſe and foot in mingled tumult riſe.
The red'ning dawn reveals the circling fields
Horrid with briſtly ſpears, and glancing ſhields.
Jove thunder'd on their ſide. Our guilty head
We turn'd to flight; the gathering vengeance ſpread
On all parts round, and heaps on heaps lie dead.
I then explor'd my thought, what courſe to prove!
(And ſure the thought was dictated by Jove,
Oh had he left me to that happier doom,
And ſav'd a life of miſeries to come!)
The radiant helmet from my brows unlac'd,
And low on earth my ſhield and javelin caſt,
I meet the monarch with a ſuppliant's face,
Approach his chariot, and his knees embrace.
He heard, he ſav'd, he plac'd me at his ſide;
My ſtate he pity'd, and my tears he dry'd,
Reſtrain'd the rage the vengeful foe expreſt,
And turn'd the deadly weapons from my breaſt.
Pious! to guard the hoſpitable rite,
And fearing Jove, whom mercy's works delight.

In Ægypt thus with peace and plenty bleſt,
I liv'd (and happy ſtill had liv'd) a gueſt,
On ſev'n bright years ſucceſſive bleſſings wait;
The next chang'd all the colour of my fate.
A falſe Phœnician of inſidious mind,
Vers'd in vile arts, and foe to humankind,
With ſemblance fair invites me to his home;
I ſeiz'd the proffer (ever fond to roam)
Domeſtic in his faithleſs roof I ſtay'd,
'Till the ſwift ſun his annual circle made.
To Lybia then he meditates the way;
With guileful art a ſtranger to betray,
And ſell to bondage in a foreign land:
Much doubting, yet compell'd, I quit the ſtrand.
Thro' the mid ſeas the nimble pinnace ſails,
Aloof from Crete, before the northern gales:
But when remote her chalky cliffs we loſt,
And far from ken of any other coaſt,
When all was wild expanſe of ſea and air;
Then doom'd high Jove due vengeance to prepare.
He hung a night of horrours o'er their head,
(The ſhaded ocean blacken'd as it ſpread)
He lanch'd the fiery bolt; from pole to pole
Broad burſt the lightnings, deep the thunders roll;
In giddy rounds the whirling ſhip is toſt,
And all in clouds of ſmoth'ring ſulphur loſt.
As from a hanging rock's tremendous height,
The ſable crows with intercepted flight
Drop endlong; ſcar'd, and black with ſulph'rous hue:
So from the deck are hurl'd the ghaſtly crew.
Such end the wicked found! But Jove's intent
Was yet to ſave th' oppreſt and innocent.
Plac'd on the maſt (the laſt recourſe of life)
With winds and waves I held unequal ſtrife;
For nine long days the billows tilting o'er,
The tenth ſoft wafts me to Theſprotia's ſhore.

The monarch's ſon a ſhipwreckt wretch reliev'd,
The ſire with hoſpitable rites receiv'd,
And in his palace like a brother plac'd,
With gifts of price and gorgeous garments grac'd.
While here I ſojourn'd, oft' I heard the fame
How late Ulyſſes to the country came,
How lov'd, how honour'd in this court he ſtay'd,
And here his whole collected treaſure lay'd;
I ſaw myſelf the vaſt unnumber'd ſtore
Of ſteel elab'rate, and refulgent ore,
And braſs high heap'd amidſt the regal dome;
Immenſe ſupplies for ages yet to come!
Meantime he voyag'd to explore the will
Of Jove on high Dodona's holy hill,

363. —— *He voyag'd to explore the will*
Of Jove on high Dodona's holy hill.]

Theſe oaks of Dodona were held to be oraculous, and to be endued with ſpeech, by the antients; and pigeons were ſuppoſed to be the prieſteſſes of the deity. Herodotus in Euterpe gives a full account of what belongs to this oracle, who tells us, that he was informed by the prieſteſſes of Dodona, that two black pigeons flew away from Thebes in Ægypt, and one of them perching upon a tree in Dodona, admoniſhed the inhabitants, with a human voice, to erect an oracle in that place to Jupiter. But Herodotus ſolves this fable after the following manner. "There were two prieſteſſes carried "away from Ægypt, and one of them was ſold by the Phœnicians "in Greece, where ſhe in her ſervitude conſecrated an altar to Ju"piter under an oak; the Dodonæans gave her the name of a pi"geon, becauſe ſhe was a barbarian, and her ſpeech at firſt no more "underſtood than the chattering of a bird or pigeon; but as ſoon as "ſhe had learned the Greek tongue, it was preſently reported that "the pigeon ſpoke with an human voice. She had the epithet "black, becauſe ſhe was an Ægyptian."

Euſtathius informs us, that Dodona was anciently a city of Theſprotia; and in proceſs of time the limits of it being changed, it became of the country of the Moloſſians, that is, it lay between Theſſaly and Epirus. Near this city was a mountain named Tmarus or Timourus: on this mountain there ſtood a temple, and within the precincts of it were theſe oraculous oaks of Jupiter: this was the moſt antient temple of Greece, according to Herodotus, founded by the Pelaſgians, and at firſt ſerved by prieſts called Selli; and the goddeſs Dione being joined with Jupiter in the wor-

What means might beſt his ſafe return avail,
To come in pomp, or bear a ſecret ſail?
Full oft' has Phidon, whilſt he pour'd the wine,
Atteſting ſolemn all the pow'rs divine,
That ſoon Ulyſſes would return, declar'd,
The ſailors waiting, and the ſhips prepar'd.
But firſt the king diſmiſs'd me from his ſhores,
For fair Dulichium crown'd with fruitful ſtores;
To good Acaſtus' friendly care conſign'd:
But other counſels pleas'd the ſailors mind:

ſhip, the ſervice was performed by three aged prieſteſſes, called in the Moloſſian tongue πέλειαι, as old men were called πέλειοι, (perhaps from the corrupted word πάλαιοι, or antients) and the ſame word πέλειαι ſignifying alſo pigeons, gave occaſion to the fable of the temple of Dodona having doves for prieſteſſes. But if, as Herodotus affirms, the Phœnicians ſold this prieſteſs of Jupiter originally to the Greeks, it is probable they were called doves, after the Phœnician language, in which the ſame word, with a ſmall alteration, ſignifies both a dove and a prieſteſs. See note on v. 75. of the twelfth Odyſſey.

Euſtathius gives us another ſolution of this difficulty, and tells us, that as there were κοράκομάνδεις, or augurs, who drew predictions from the flight and geſtures of crows; ſo there were others who predicted from obſervations made upon doves; and from hence theſe doves were called the propheteſſes of Dodona, that being the way by which the decrees of the gods were diſcovered by the augurs.

I have remarked, that the temple of Dodona ſtood upon the mountain Timourus; hence the word τίμυρα came to ſignify thoſe oracles, and thus τίμυρος is uſed by Lycophron. Now Homer in another places writes,

Εἴ γε μὲν αἰνήσουσι Διὸς μεγάλοιο Θέμιστες.

Strabo therefore, inſtead of Θέμιστες, reads τίμυρα; for, obſerves that author, the oracles, not the laws of Jupiter, are preſerved at Dodona. Euſtathius.

But whence aroſe the fables of theſe oaks being vocal? I doubt not but this was an illuſion of thoſe who gave out the oracles to the people: they concealed themſelves within the cavities or hollow of the oaks, and from thence delivered their oracles; and impoſing by this method upon the ſuperſtition and credulity of thoſe ages, perſuaded the world that the gods gave a voice and utterance to the oaks.

I refer the reader, for a larger account of thoſe Dodonæan oracles, to the annotations upon book xvi. verſe 285. of the Iliad.

New frauds were plotted by the faithleſs train,
And miſery demands me once again.
Soon as remote from ſhore they plough the wave,
With ready hands they ruſh to ſeize their ſlave;
Then with theſe tatter'd rags they wrapt me round,
(Stript of my own) and to the veſſel bound.
At eve, at Ithaca's delightful land
The ſhip arriv'd: forth-iſſuing on the ſand,
They ſought repaſt; while to th' unhappy kind,
The pitying gods themſelves my chains unbind.
Soft I deſcended, to the ſea apply'd
My naked breaſt, and ſhot along the tide.
Soon paſt beyond their ſight, I left the flood,
And took the ſpreading ſhelter of the wood.
Their prize eſcap'd the faithleſs pirates mourn'd;
But deem'd enquiry vain, and to their ſhip return'd.
Screen'd by protecting gods from hoſtile eyes,
They led me to a good man and a wife;
To live beneath thy hoſpitable care,
And wait the woes heav'n dooms me yet to bear.

v. 391. *Screen'd by protecting gods from hoſtile eyes,*
Thy led me to a good man and a wife]

This is a very artful compliment which Ulyſſes pays to Eumæus; "The gods guided me to the habitation of a perſon of wiſdom," and names not Eumæus, leaving it to him to apply it.

I doubt not but the reader agrees with Ulyſſes as to the character of Eumæus; there is an air of piety to the gods in all he ſpeaks, and benevolence to mankind; he is faithful to his king, upright in his truſt, and hoſpitable to the ſtranger.

Dacier is of opinion, that ἀνδρὸς ἐπιϛαμένοιο takes in virtue as well as wiſdom; and indeed Homer frequently joins νοήμονες ἠδὲ δίκαιοι, and ἀδαήμονες ἠδὲ δίκαιοι; this is, wiſdom and virtue, folly and impiety, throughout the Odyſſey. "For never, never wicked man "was wiſe." Virtue in a great meaſure depends upon education: it is a ſcience, and may be learned like other ſciences; in reality there is no knowledge that deſerves the name, without virtue; if virtue be wanting, ſcience becomes artifice: as Plato demonſtrates from Homer; who, though he is an enemy to this poet, has enriched his writings with his ſentiments.

v. 394. *And wait the woes heav'n dooms me yet to bear.*] It may not perhaps be unſatisfactory to ſee how Ulyſſes keeps in ſight of truth through his whole fabulous ſtory.

Unhappy gueſt! whoſe ſorrows touch my mind!
(Thus good Eumæus with a ſigh rejoin'd)
For real ſuff'rings ſince I grieve ſincere,
Check not with fallacies the ſpringing tear;
Nor turn the paſſion into groundleſs joy
For him, whom heav'n has deſtin'd to deſtroy.
Oh! had he periſht on ſome well-fought day,
Or in his friends embraces dy'd away!
That grateful Greece with ſtreaming eyes might raiſe
Hiſtoric marbles, to record his praiſe:
His praiſe, eternal on the faithful ſtone,
Had with tranſmiſſive honours grac'd his ſon.
Now ſnatch'd by harpies to the dreary coaſt,
Sunk is the hero, and his glory loſt!
While penſive in this ſolitary den,
Far from gay cities, and the ways of men,

He gives a true account of his being at the war of Troy; he ſtays ſeven years in Ægypt, ſo long he continued with Calypſo; the king of Ægypt, whoſe name Euſtathius tells us was Sethon, according to the antients, entertains him hoſpitably like that goddeſs; a Phœnician detains him a whole year; the ſame has been obſerved of Circe; the veſſel of this Phœnician is loſt by a ſtorm, and all the crew periſhes except Ulyſſes. The ſame is true of the companions of Ulyſſes: he is thrown upon the land of the Theſprotians by that tempeſt, and received courteouſly by Phidon, the king of that country; this repreſents his being caſt upon the Phæacian ſhore by the ſtorm, and the hoſpitable Phidon means Alcinous, king of the Phæacians: the manner likewiſe of his being introduced to Phidon, agrees with his introduction to Alcinous; the daughter introduces him to Alcinous, and the ſon to Phidon. Thus we ſee there is a "concor-" dia diſcors" through the whole narration, the poet only changing the names of perſons and places. Ulyſſes lay under an abſolute neceſſity thus to falſify his true hiſtory, and repreſent himſelf as a ſtranger to the whole iſland of Ithaca, otherwiſe it would have been natural for Eumæus to offer to guide him to his friends, upon which a diſcovery muſt inevitably have followed, which would have proved fatal to that hero.

v. 407. *Now ſnatch'd by harpies*———] This place ſeems to evince, that the expreſſion of being torn by the harpies, means that the dead perſon is deprived of the rites of ſepulture; and not as Dacier underſtands it, that he is diſappeared, or that it is unknown what is become of him; for the whole lamentation of Eumæus turns upon this point, namely, that Ulyſſes is dead, and deprived of the funeral ceremonies.

I linger life; nor to the court repair,
But when the conſtant queen commands my care;
Or when, to taſte her hoſpitable board,
Some gueſt arrives, with rumours of her lord;
And theſe indulge their want, and thoſe their woe,
And here the tears, and there the goblets flow.
By many ſuch have I been warn'd; but chief
By one Ætolian robb'd of all belief,

v. 411. —— *Nor to the court repair,*
But when the queen ——]

It may appear, at firſt view, as if Eumæus thought his abſence from the court an aggravation to his calamities; but this is not his meaning: he ſpeaks thus to prevent Ulyſſes from aſking him to introduce him immediately to Penelope; and this is the reaſon why he enlarges upon the ſtory of the Æolian, who had deceived him by raiſing his expectations of the immediate return of Ulyſſes.

It is remarkable, that almoſt all theſe fictions are made by Cretans, or have ſome relation to the iſland of the Cretans: thus Ulyſſes feigns himſelf to be of Crete, and this Æolian lays the ſcene of his falſhood in the ſame iſland: which, as Euſtathius obſerves, may poſſibly be a latent ſatyr upon that people, who were become a reproach and proverb for their remarkable lying. This agrees exactly with the character given them by St. Paul from Epimenides.

Κρῆτες ἀεὶ ψεῦσαι.

And κρητίζειν ſignifies to lie.

St. Chryſoſtom fills up the broken verſe thus,

——ἦ γὰρ τάφον, ὦ ἄνα, σεῖο
Κρῆτες ἐτεκτήναντο, σὺ δ' οὐ θάνες, ἐσσὶ γὰρ αἰεί.

But this is added from Callimachus in his hymn to Jupiter, thus tranſlated by Mr. Prior,

The Cretan boaſts thy natal place: but oft',
He meets reproof deſerv'd: for he preſumptuous
Has built a tomb for thee, who never know'ſt
To die, but liv'ſt the ſame to day and ever.

That the latter part of theſe verſes belongs not to Epimenides, is evident, for St. Paul quotes the verſe thus:

Κρῆτες ἀεὶ ψεῦσαι, κακὰ θηρία.

The two laſt words are not in Callimachus, and conſequently the reſt is only a conjectural and erroneous addition.

Whoſe hap it was to this our roof to roam,
For murder baniſh'd from his native home,
He ſwore, Ulyſſes on the coaſt of Crete
Staid but a ſeaſon to refit his fleet;
A few revolving months ſhou'd waft him o'er
Fraught with bold warriours, and a boundleſs ſtore.
O thou! whom age has taught to underſtand,
And heav'n has guided with a fav'ring hand!
On God or mortal to obtrude a lie
Forbear, and dread to flatter, as to die.
Not for ſuch ends my houſe and heart are free,
But dear reſpect to Jove, and charity.
And why, oh ſwain of unbelieving mind!
(Thus quick reply'd the wiſeſt of mankind)
Doubt you my oath? yet more my faith to try,
A ſolemn compact let us ratify,
And witneſs ev'ry pow'r that rules the ſky!
If here Ulyſſes from his labours reſt,
Be then my prize a tunic and a veſt;
And, where my hopes invite me, ſtraight tranſport
In ſafety to Dulichium's friendly court.
But if he greets not thy deſiring eye,
Hurl me from yon' dread precipice on high;
The due reward of fraud and perjury.
Doubtleſs, oh gueſt! great laud and praiſe were mine
(Reply'd the ſwain for ſpotleſs faith divine)
If, after ſocial rites and gifts beſtow'd,
I ſtain'd my hoſpitable hearth with blood,
How would the gods my righteous toils ſucceed,
And bleſs the hand that made a ſtranger bleed?
No more—th' approaching hours of ſilent night
Firſt claim refection, then to reſt invite;
Beneath our humble cottage let us haſte,
And here, unenvy'd, rural dainties taſte.
Thus commun'd theſe; while to their lowly dome
The full-fed ſwine return'd with evening home;

Compell'd, reluctant, to their ſev'ral ſties,
With din obſtrep'rous, and ungrateful cries.
Then to the ſlaves —Now from the herd the beſt
Select, in honour of our foreign gueſt:
With him, let us the genial banquet ſhare,
For great and many are the griefs we bear;
While thoſe who from our labours heap their board,
Blaſpheme their feeder, and forget their lord.
Thus ſpeaking, with diſpatchful hand he took
A weighty ax, and cleft the ſolid oak;
This on the earth he pil'd; a boar full fed
Of five years age, before the pile was led:
The ſwain, whom acts of piety delight,
Obſervant of the gods, begins the rite;
Firſt ſhears the forehead of the briſtly boar,
And ſuppliant ſtands, invoking ev'ry pow'r
To ſpeed Ulyſſes to his native ſhore.

v. 455. *Compell'd, reluctant, to their ſev'ral ſties,*
With din obſtrep'rous, and ungrateful cries.]

There is ſcarce a more ſonorous verſe in the whole Odyſſey.

Κλαγγὴ δ' ἄσπετος ὦρτο συῶν αὐλιζομενάων.

The word ſwine is what debaſes our idea; which is evident, if we ſubſtitute "ſhepherd" in the room of "hogherd," and apply to it the moſt pompous epithet given by Homer to Eumæus. For inſtance, to ſay δῖος, or the illuſtrious hogherd, is mean enough: but the image is more tolerable when we ſay, the illuſtrious ſhepherd; the office of a ſhepherd (eſpecially as it is familiarized and dignified in poetry by the frequent uſe of it) being in repute. The Greeks have magnificent words to expreſs the moſt common objects; we want words of equal dignity, and have the diſadvantage of being obliged to endeavour to raiſe a ſubject that is now in the utmoſt contempt, ſo as to guard it from meanneſs and ignominy.

v. 469. *Firſt ſhears the forehead of the briſtly boar.*] I have already obſerved, that every meal among the antients was a kind of ſacrifice of thankſgiving to the gods; and the table, as it were, an altar.

This ſacrifice being different from any other in Homer, I will fully deſcribe the particulars of it from Euſtathius. It is a rural ſacrifice; we have before ſeen ſacrifices in camps, in courts, and in cities, in the Iliad; but this is the only one of this nature in all Homer.

A knotty ſtake then aiming at his head,
Down dropp'd he groaning, and the ſpirit fled.
The ſcorching flames climb round on ev'ry ſide:
Then the ſindg'd members they with ſkill divide;
On theſe, in rolls of fat involv'd with art
The choiceſt morſels lay from ev'ry part.
Some in the flames, beſtrow'd with flour, they threw:
Some cut in fragments, from the forks they drew:
Theſe while on ſev'ral tables they diſpoſe,
As prieſt himſelf, the blameleſs ruſtic roſe;
Expert the deſtin'd victim to diſ-part
In ſev'n juſt portions, pure of hand and heart.
One ſacred to the nymphs apart they lay;
Another to the winged ſon of May:

They cut off the hair of the victim, in commemoration of the original way of cloathing, which was made of hair, and the ſkins of beaſts.

Eumæus ſtrows flour upon it; in remembrance, that before incenſe was in uſe, this was the antient manner of offering to the gods, or as Dacier obſerves, of conſecrating the victim, inſtead of the barley mixed with ſalt, which had the name of immolation.

Eumæus cut a piece from every part of the victim; by this he made it an holocauſt, or an intire ſacrifice.

Eumæus divides the reſt at ſupper; which was always the office of the moſt honourable perſon; and thus we ſee Achilles and other heroes employed throughout the Iliad. He portions it into ſeven parts; one he allots to Mercury and the nymphs, and the reſt he reſerves for himſelf, Ulyſſes, and his four ſervants. He gives the chine to Ulyſſes, which was ever reputed an honour and diſtinction; thus Ajax after a victory over Hector, is rewarded in the ſame manner.

Ἠώτοισι δ' Αἴαντα διηνεκέσσι γέραιρεν
Ἀτρεΐδης.

v. 484. *One ſacred to the nymphs* ——
Another to the winged ſon of May.]

It may be aſked why Eumæus allots part of the victim to Mercury and the nymphs, ſince there is nothing of the like nature to be found in the whole Iliad and Odyſſey? This is done in compliance to the place and perſon of Eumæus, whoſe employment lies in the country, and who has the care of the herds of Ulyſſes; he therefore offers to the nymphs, as they are the preſidents of the fountains, rivers, groves,

The rural tribe in common ſhare the reſt,
The king the chine, the honour of the feaſt,
Who ſat delighted at his ſervant's board;
The faithful ſervant joy'd his unknown lord.
Oh be thou dear (Ulyſſes cry'd) to Jove,
As well thou claim'ſt a grateful ſtranger's love!
Be then thy thanks, (the bounteous ſwain reply'd)
Enjoyment of the good the gods provide.
From God's own hand deſcend our joys and woes;
Theſe he decrees, and he but ſuffers thoſe:
All pow'r is his, and whatſoe'er he wills,
The will itſelf, omnipotent, fulfills.
This ſaid, the firſt fruits to the gods he gave;
Then pour'd of offer'd wine the ſable wave:
In great Ulyſſes' hand he plac'd the bowl,
He ſat, and ſweet reflection chear'd his ſoul.
The bread from caniſters Meſaulius gave,
(Eumæus' proper treaſure bought this ſlave,
And led from Taphos, to attend his board,
A ſervant added to his abſent lord)

and furniſh ſuſtenance and food for cattle: and Mercury was held by the antients to be the patron of ſhepherds. Thus Simonides,

Θέειν Νύμφαις ἠ Μαιάδος τόκῳ
Οὗτοι γὰρ ἀνδρῶν αἷμα ἔχθουσι ποιμαίνων.

Euſtathius adds, (from whom this is taken) that Mercury was a lucrative god, and therefore Eumæus ſacrifices to him for increaſe of his herds: or becauſe he was δόλιος ἑρμῆς, and, like Ulyſſes, maſter of all the arts of cunning and diſſimulation, and then Eumæus may be underſtood to offer to him for the ſafety of Ulyſſes, that he might furniſh him with artifice to bring him in ſecurity to his country; and we ſee this agrees with his prayer.

What Dacier adds is yet more to the purpoſe. Eumæus joins Mercury with the nymphs becauſe he was patron of flocks, and the antients generally placed the figure of a ram at the baſe of his images; ſometimes he is repreſented carrying a ram upon his arms, ſometimes upon his ſhoulders: in ſhort, it ſuffices that he was eſteemed a rural deity, to make the ſacrifice proper to be offered to him by a perſon whoſe occupation lay in the country.

v. 504. *And led from Taphos*————] This cuſtom of purchaſing ſlaves prevailed over all the world, as appears not only from

His taſk it was the wheaten loaves to lay,
And from the banquet take the bowls away.
And now the rage of hunger was repreſt,
And each betakes him to his couch to reſt.

many places of Homer, but of the holy ſcriptures, in which mention is made of ſlaves bought with money. The Taphians lived in a ſmall iſland adjacent to Ithaca; Mentes was king of it, as appears from the firſt of the Odyſſey: they were generally pirates, and are ſuppoſed to have had their name from their way of living, which in the Phœnician tongue (as Bochart obſerves) ſignifies rapine; Hataph, and by contraction Taph, bearing that ſignification.

Frequent uſe has been made of Phœnician interpretations through the courſe of theſe notes, and perhaps it may be judged neceſſary to ſay ſomething why they muſt be ſuppoſed to give names to countries and perſons, more than any other nation.

They are reported to be the inventors of letters, Lucan, lib. iii.

" Phœnices primi, famæ ſi creditur, auſi
" Manſuram rudibus vocem ſignare figuris."

and were the greateſt navigators in the world, Dionyſius ſays they were the firſt,

Οἱ πρῶτοι νήεσσιν ἐπειρήσαντο θαλάσσης,
Πρῶτοι δ' ἐμπορίης ἁλιδινέος ἐμνήσαντο.

" The firſt who uſed navigation, the firſt who trafficked by the ocean." If we put theſe two qualities together, it is no wonder that a great number of places were called by Phœnician names: for they being the firſt navigators, muſt neceſſarily diſcover a multitude of iſlands, countries, and cities, to which they would be obliged to give names when they deſcribed them. And nothing is ſo probable, as that they gave thoſe names according to the obſervations they made upon the nature of the ſeveral countries, or employment of the inhabitants. In the preſent inſtance, the Taphians being remarkable pirates, (as appears from Homer,

——Τάφιοι λῃστῆρες ἄνδρες
——λῃϊῇσιν ἐπισπόμενος Ταφιοῖσι.)

The Phœnicians, who firſt diſcovered this iſland, called it Taph, the iſland of pirates. Places receive appellations according to the language of the diſcoverer, and generally from obſervations made upon the people. It will add a weight to this ſuppoſition if we remember that Homer was well acquainted with the traditions and cuſtoms of the Phœnicians; for he ſpeaks frequently of that people through the courſe of the Odyſſey.

Now came the night, and darkneſs covered o'er
The face of things; the winds began to roar;

v. 510. *Now came the night,——*
—— the winds began to roar ; &c.]

Euſtathius obſerves, that Homer introduces the following ſtory by a very artful connexion, and makes it, as it were, grow out of the ſubject: the coldneſs of the preſent ſeaſon brings to his mind a time like it, when he lay before Troy.

It is remarkable, that almoſt all poets have taken an opportunity to give long deſcriptions of the night; Virgil, Statius, Apollonius, Taſſo, and Dryden, have enlarged upon this ſubject: Homer ſeems induſtriouſly to have avoided it: perhaps he judged ſuch deſcriptions to be no more than excreſcences, and at beſt but beautiful ſuperfluities. A modern hypercritic thinks Mr. Dryden to have excelled all the poets in this point.

All things are huſh'd as nature's ſelf lay dead,
The mountains ſeem to nod their drowſy head, &c.

The laſt verſe is tranſlated from Statius,

" Et ſimulant feſſos curvata cacumina ſomnos."

which I mention only to propoſe it to conſideration, whether " cacumina" muſt, in this place, of neceſſity ſignify the tops of mountains; why may it not be applied, as it is frequently, to the tops of the trees? I queſtion whether the nodding of a mountain, or the appearance of its nodding, be a natural image: whereas if we underſtand it of the trees, the difficulty vaniſhes; and the meaning will be much more eaſy, that the very trees ſeem to nod, as in ſleep.

I beg the reader's patience to mention another verſe of Statius, that has been undoubtedly miſtaken.

" Qualis ubi audito venantum murmure Tigris,
" Horruit in maculas."——

Which Cowley renders,

—— he ſwells with angry pride,
And calls forth all his ſpots on ev'ry ſide.

In which ſenſe alſo, the author of the Spectator quotes it from Cowley. But it is impoſſible to imagine that the hair of any creature can change into ſpots; and if any creature could change it by anger, would not the ſpots remain when the paſſion was over? The aſſertion is abſolutely againſt nature, and matter of fact; and as abſurd as to affirm that the hair of a tiger bluſhes. This miſtake ariſes from the double ſenſe of the word " maculæ," which ſignifies alſo the meſhes of a net, as any common dictionary will inform us. So Tully, " Reticulum minutis maculis;" Columella,

The driving ſtorm the wat'ry weſt-wind pours,
And Jove deſcends in deluges of ſhow'rs.
Studious of reſt and warmth, Ulyſſes lies,
Foreſeeing from the firſt the ſtorm wou'd riſe ;
In mere neceſſity of coat and cloak,
With artful preface to his hoſt he ſpoke.
Hear me, my friends! who this good banquet grace;
'Tis ſweet to play the fool in time and place,
And wine can of their wits the wiſe beguile,
Make the ſage frolic, and the ſerious ſmile,
The grave in merry meaſures friſk about,
And many a long repented word bring out.
Since to be talkative I now commence,
Let wit caſt off the ſullen yoke of ſenſe,
Once I was ſtrong (wou'd heav'n reſtore thoſe days)
And with my betters claim'd a ſhare of praiſe.
Ulyſſes, Menelaus led forth a band,
And join'd me with them, ('twas their own command ;)
A deathful ambuſh for the foe to lay,
Beneath Troy walls by night we took our way :
There, clad in arms, along the marſhes ſpread,
We made the oſier-fringed bank our bed.
Full ſoon th' inclemency of heav'n I feel,
Nor had theſe ſhoulders cov'ring, but of ſteel,
Sharp blew the north ; ſnow whitening all the fields
Froze with the blaſt, and gath'ring glaz'd our ſhields.
There all but I, well fenc'd with cloak and veſt,
Lay cover'd by their ample ſhields at reſt.

" Rete grandi macula ;" Ovid, " Diſtinctum maculis rete." This way the ſenſe is obvious ; no wonder that a tiger, when encloſed in the toils, ſhould " horrere in maculis, or erect his hair when he flies againſt the meſhes, endeavouring to eſcape ; and it agrees with the nature of that animal, to roughen his hair when he is angry. I beg the reader's pardon for all this ; but the mention of a hypercritic was infecting, and led me into it unawares.

Fool that I was! I left behind my own:
The ſkill of weather and of winds unknown,
And truſted to my coat and ſhield alone!
When now was waſted more than half the night,
And the ſtars faded at approaching light;
Sudden I jogg'd Ulyſſes, who was laid
Faſt by my ſide, and ſhiv'ring thus I ſaid.
Here longer in this field I cannot lie,
The winter pinches, and with cold I die,
And die aſham'd (oh wiſeſt of mankind)
The only fool who left his cloak behind.
He thought, and anſwer'd: hardly waking yet,
Sprung in his mind the momentary wit;
(That wit, which or in council, or in fight,
Still met th' emergence, and determin'd right)
Huſh thee, he cry'd, (ſoft whiſpering in my ear)
Speak not a word, leſt any Greek may hear——
And then (ſupporting on his arm his head)
Hear me, companions! (thus aloud he ſaid)
Methinks too diſtant from the fleet we lie:
Ev'n now a viſion ſtood before my eye,
And ſure the warning viſion was from high:

v. 540. *I left behind my cloak*, &c.] To underſtand this paſſage, we muſt remember, that in thoſe eaſtern regions, after very hot days, an extreme cold night would ſometimes ſucceed, even with froſt and ſnow, contrary to the uſual order of the ſeaſon. If it had been winter, no doubt Ulyſſes would have armed himſelf againſt the nocturnal cold, and not have been reduced to ſuch an extremity.

There is one incident in this ſtory that ſeems extraordinary: Ulyſſes and Menelaus are ſaid to form an ambuſh under the very walls of Troy, and yet are deſcribed to be ſleeping while they thus form it. The words are, εὗδον εἰνηλοι. Εὕδον does not neceſſarily ſignify to be aſleep, as is already proved from the concluſion of the firſt Iliad: but here it muſt have that import; for Ulyſſes tells his companions, that he has had an extraordinary dream. Beſides, even a tendency towards ſleep ſhould be avoided by ſoldiers in an ambuſcade, eſpecially by the leaders of it. The only anſwer that occurs to me is, that perhaps they had centinels waking while they ſlept; but even this would be unſoldier-like in our age.

Let from among us ſome ſwift courier riſe,
Haſte to the gen'ral and demand ſupplies.
Upſtarted Thoas ſtraight, Andræmon's ſon,
Nimbly he roſe, and caſt his garment down;
Inſtant, the racer vaniſh'd off the ground;
That inſtant, in his cloak I wrapt me round:
And ſafe I ſlept, till brightly-dawning ſhone
The morn, conſpicuous on her golden throne.
Oh were my ſtrength as then, as then my age!
Some friend would fence me from the winter's rage.
Yet tatter'd as I look, I challeng'd then
The honours, and the offices of men:
Some maſter, or ſome ſervant would allow
A cloak and veſt—but I am nothing now!
Well haſt thou ſpoke (rejoin'd th' attentive ſwain)
Thy lips let fall no idle word or vain!
Nor garment ſhalt thou want, nor ought beſide,
Meet, for the wand'ring ſuppliant to provide.
But in the morning take thy cloaths again,
For here one veſt ſuffices ev'ry ſwain;

v. 580. *But in the morning take thy cloaths again.*] This is not ſpoken in vain, it was neceſſary for Ulyſſes to appear in the form of a beggar, to prevent diſcovery.

The word in the Greek is δνοπαλίξεις, which it is impoſſible to tranſlate without a circumlocution. It paints (obſerves Euſtathius) exactly the dreſs of a beggar, and the difficulty he labours under in drawing his rags to cover one part of his body that is naked, and while he covers that, leaving the other part bare: δνοπαλίξεις is ταῖς παλάμαις δονήσεις or δινήσεις, and expreſſes how a beggar is embarraſſed in the act of covering his body, by reaſon of the rents in his cloaths.

v. 581. *For here one veſt ſuffices ev'ry ſwain*, &c.] It is not at firſt view evident, why Ulyſſes requeſts a change of raiment from Eumæus, for a better dreſs would only have expoſed him to the danger of a diſcovery. Beſides, this would have been a direct oppoſition to the injunctions of the goddeſs of wiſdom, who had not only diſguiſed him in the habit of a beggar, but changed his features to a conformity with it. Why then ſhould he make this petition? The anſwer is, to carry on his diſguiſe the better before Eumæus; he has already told him that he was once a perſon of dignity, though now reduced to poverty by calamities: and conſequently a perſon who

No change of garments to our hinds is known :
But when return'd the good Ulyſſes' ſon
With better hand ſhall grace with fit attires
His gueſt, and ſend thee where thy ſoul deſires.
The honeſt herdſman roſe, as this he ſaid,
And drew before the hearth the ſtranger's bed :
The fleecy ſpoils of ſheep, a goat's rough hide
He ſpreads ; and adds a mantle thick and wide ;
With ſtore to heap above him, and below,
And guard each quarter as the tempeſts blow.
There lay the king, and all the reſt ſupine ;
All, but the careful maſter of the ſwine :
Forth haſted he to tend his briſtly care :
Well arm'd, and fenc'd againſt nocturnal air ;

had once known better fortunes, would be uneaſy under ſuch mean circumſtances, and deſire to appear like himſelf ; therefore he aſks a better dreſs, that Eumæus may believe his former ſtory.

What Eumæus ſpeaks of not having many changes of garments, is not a ſign of poverty, but of the ſimplicity of the manners of thoſe ages. It is the character of the luxurious, vain Phæacians, to delight in changes of dreſs, and agrees not with this plain, ſincere, induſtrious Ithacan, Eumæus.

I wonder this laſt part of the relation of Ulyſſes has eſcaped the cenſure of the critics : the circumſtance of getting the cloak of Thoas in the cold night, though it ſhews the artifice of Ulyſſes eſſential to his character, yet perhaps may be thought unworthy the majeſty of epic poetry, where every thing ought to be great and magnificent. It is of ſuch a nature as to raiſe a ſmile, rather than admiration ; and Virgil has utterly rejected ſuch levities. Perhaps it may be thought that Ulyſſes adapts himſelf to Eumæus, and endeavours to engage his favour by that piece of pleaſantry ; yet this does not ſolve the objection, for Eumæus is not a perſon of a low character : no one in the Odyſſey ſpeaks with better ſenſe, or better morality. One would almoſt imagine that Homer was ſenſible of the weakneſs of this ſtory, he introduces it ſo artfully. He tells us in a ſhort preface, that wine unbends the moſt ſerious and wiſe perſon, and makes him laugh, dance, and ſpeak, without his uſual caution : and then he proceeds to the fable of his ambuſh before Troy. But no introduction can reconcile it to thoſe who think ſuch comic relations ſhould not at all be introduced into epic poetry.

v. 594. *Forth haſted he to tend his briſtly care.*] A French critic has been very ſevere upon this conduct of Eumæus. "The di-

His weighty falchion o'er his ſhoulder ty'd:
His ſhaggy cloak a mountain goat ſupply'd:
With his broad ſpear, the dread of dogs and men,
He ſeeks his lodging in the rocky den.
There to the tuſky herd he bends his way,
Where ſcreen'd from Boreas, high o'er-arch'd they lay.

" vine-hogherd, ſays he, having given the divine Ulyſſes his ſupper, " ſends him to ſleep with his hogs, that had white teeth." When critics find fault, they ought to take care that they impute nothing to an author but what the author really ſpeaks, otherwiſe it is not criticiſm, but calumny and ignorance. Monſieur Perrault is here guilty of both, for Ulyſſes ſleeps in the houſe of Eumæus, and Eumæus retires to take care of his charge, not to ſleep, but to watch with them.

This and the preceding book take up no more than the ſpace of one day. Ulyſſes lands in the morning, which is ſpent in conſultation with Minerva how to bring about his reſtoration. About noon he comes to Eumæus, for immediately after his arrival they dine: they paſs the afternoon and evening in conference: ſo that thirty five days are exactly completed ſince the beginning of the Odyſſey.

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But when return'd the good Ulyſſes' ſon
With better hand ſhall grace with fit attires
His gueſt, and ſend thee where thy ſoul deſires.
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The fleecy ſpoils of ſheep, a goat's rough hide
He ſpreads ; and adds a mantle thick and wide ;
With ſtore to heap above him, and below,
And guard each quarter as the tempeſts blow.
There lay the king, and all the reſt ſupine ;
All, but the careful maſter of the ſwine :
Forth haſted he to tend his briſtly care :
Well arm'd, and fenc'd againſt nocturnal air ;

had once known better fortunes, would be uneaſy under ſuch mean circumſtances, and deſire to appear like himſelf ; therefore he aſks a better dreſs, that Eumæus may believe his former ſtory.

What Eumæus ſpeaks of not having many changes of garments, is not a ſign of poverty, but of the ſimplicity of the manners of thoſe ages. It is the character of the luxurious, vain Phæacians, to delight in changes of dreſs, and agrees not with this plain, ſincere, induſtrious Ithacan, Eumæus.

I wonder this laſt part of the relation of Ulyſſes has eſcaped the cenſure of the critics : the circumſtance of getting the cloak of Thoas in the cold night, though it ſhews the artifice of Ulyſſes eſſential to his character, yet perhaps may be thought unworthy the majeſty of epic poetry, where every thing ought to be great and magnificent. It is of ſuch a nature as to raiſe a ſmile, rather than admiration ; and Virgil has utterly rejected ſuch levities. Perhaps it may be thought that Ulyſſes adapts himſelf to Eumæus, and endeavours to engage his favour by that piece of pleaſantry ; yet this does not ſolve the objection, for Eumæus is not a perſon of a low character : no one in the Odyſſey ſpeaks with better ſenſe, or better morality. One would almoſt imagine that Homer was ſenſible of the weakneſs of this ſtory, he introduces it ſo artfully. He tells us in a ſhort preface, that wine unbends the moſt ſerious and wiſe perſon, and makes him laugh, dance, and ſpeak, without his uſual caution : and then he proceeds to the fable of his ambuſh before Troy. But no introduction can reconcile it to thoſe who think ſuch comic relations ſhould not at all be introduced into epic poetry.

v. 594. *Forth haſted he to tend his briſtly care.*] A French critic has been very ſevere upon this conduct of Eumæus. " The di-

His weighty falchion o'er his ſhoulder ty'd:
His ſhaggy cloak a mountain goat ſupply'd:
With his broad ſpear, the dread of dogs and men,
He ſeeks his lodging in the rocky den.
There to the tuſky herd he bends his way,
Where ſcreen'd from Boreas, high o'er-arch'd they lay.

"vine hogherd, ſays he, having given the divine Ulyſſes his ſupper, "ſends him to ſleep with his hogs, that had white teeth." When critics find fault, they ought to take care that they impute nothing to an author but what the author really ſpeaks, otherwiſe it is not criticiſm, but calumny and ignorance. Monſieur Perrault is here guilty of both, for Ulyſſes ſleeps in the houſe of Eumæus, and Eumæus retires to take care of his charge, not to ſleep, but to watch with them.

This and the preceding book take up no more than the ſpace of one day. Ulyſſes lands in the morning, which is ſpent in conſultation with Minerva how to bring about his reſtoration. About noon he comes to Eumæus, for immediately after his arrival they dine: they paſs the afternoon and evening in converſe: ſo that thirty-five days are exactly completed ſince the beginning of the Odyſſey.

THE ODYSSEY.

* BOOK XV.

THE ARGUMENT.

The return of Telemachus.

The goddeſs Minerva commands Telemachus in a viſion to return to Ithaca. Piſiſtratus and he take leave of Menelaus, and arrive at Pylos, where they part; and Telemachus ſets ſail, after having received on board Theoclymenus the ſoothſayer. The ſcene then changes to the cottage of Eumæus, who entertains Ulyſſes with a recital of his adventures. In the mean time Telemachus arrives on the coaſt, and ſending the veſſel to the town, proceeds by himſelf to the lodge of Eumæus.

NOW had Minerva reach'd thoſe ample plains,
Fam'd for the dance, where Menelaus reigns;
Anxious ſhe flies to great Ulyſſes' heir;
His inſtant voyage challeng'd all her care.

* Neither this book, nor indeed ſome of the following, are to be reckoned among the moſt ſhining parts of the Odyſſey. They are narrative, and generally low; yet natural, and juſt enough, conſidering Homer was reſolved to deſcribe and follow low life ſo very minutely. This great poet here reſembles an evening ſun; he has not the ſame heat or brightneſs; there are ſeveral little clouds about him, though in ſome places gilded and adorned: however, to make us amends, he breaks out again before the concluſion of his courſe, and ſets at laſt in glory.

There is no doubt, but all the parts of a poem are not capable of equal luſtre; nay, they ought not to dazzle us alike, or tire us by a perpetual ſtrain upon the imagination. But in theſe cooler relations a tranſlator has a hard taſk: he is expected to "ſhine," where the author is "not bright:" and the unreaſonable critic

Beneath the royal portico diſplay'd,
With Neſtor's ſon, Telemachus was lay'd;

demands a copy more noble than the original. It is true, theſe are the paſſages of which he ought to take particular care, and to ſet them off to the beſt advantage: but however he may poliſh a vulgar ſtone, it will ſtill retain its inherent degree of cloudineſs; and the man is ignorant indeed, who thinks one can make it a diamond.

The ſtory now turns to Telemachus, and the poet briefly deſcribes his voyage to his country: there is a neceſſity to be conciſe, for the hero of an epic poem is never to be out of ſight, after his introduction. The little time that Homer employs in the return of Telemachus is not ſpent unuſefully by Ulyſſes; during this interval, he learns the ſtate of his public and domeſtic affairs from Eumæus, and prepares the way for the deſtruction of the ſuitors, the chief deſign of the whole Odyſſey. There is another reaſon why the poet ought not to dwell at large upon the ſtory of Telemachus; he bears but an incidental relation to the Odyſſey, and conſequently Homer was neceſſitated to paſs over his actions with brevity, that he might deſcribe the hero of his poem at full length. It has been objected, that no mention has been made of any action at all of Telemachus during his whole ſtay with Menelaus, and that he lies there idly, without making his voyage contribute any thing to the reſtitution of Ulyſſes; but from the former obſervation it is evident, that this ſilence in the poet proceeds from judgment; nothing is to be inſerted in an epic poem but what has ſome affinity with the main deſign of it: but what affinity could the actions of Telemachus in the Spartan court have with thoſe of Ulyſſes? This would have been to make two heroes in one poem, and would have broken the unity of the action; whereas by the contrary conduct Homer unites the two ſtories, and makes the voyage of Telemachus ſubſervient to the chief action, namely, the reſtitution of Ulyſſes. Telemachus undertakes a voyage to make enquiry after Ulyſſes; this the poet fully deſcribes, becauſe it has an immediate relation to Ulyſſes; but paſſes over all other adventures during the abſence of Telemachus, becauſe they have no relation to the deſign.

I know it has been objected, that the whole ſtory of Telemachus is foreign to the Odyſſey, and that the four firſt books have not a ſufficient connexion with the reſt of the poem, and therefore that there is a double action: but this objection will ceaſe, if it be made appear, that this voyage contributes to the reſtoration of Ulyſſes; for whatever incident has ſuch an effect, is united to the ſubject and eſſential to it. Now that this voyage has ſuch an effect is very evident; the ſuitors were ready to ſeize the throne of Ulyſſes, and compel his wife to marry; but by this voyage Telemachus breaks their whole deſigns. Inſtead of uſurping the throne, they are obliged to defend themſelves: they defer their purpoſe, and waſte much time in endeavouring to

In ſleep profound the ſon of Neſtor lies;
Not thine, Ulyſſes! Care had ſeal'd his eyes:

intercept him in his return. By this method leiſure is gained from the violence and addreſſes of the ſuitors, till Ulyſſes returns and brings about his own re-eſtabliſhment. This voyage therefore is the ſecret ſource from which all the happineſs of Ulyſſes flows: for had not Telemachus ſailed to Pyle, Penelope muſt have been compelled to marry, and the throne of Ulyſſes uſurped. I have been more large upon this objection, becauſe many foreign critics lay great weight upon it. See note on v. 110. of the firſt book.

There has lately been a great diſpute amongſt the French, concerning the length of the ſtay of Telemachus from his country. The debate is not very material, nor is it very difficult to ſettle that point. Telemachus ſailed from Ithaca in the evening of the ſecond day, and returns to it on the thirty-eighth in the morning, ſo that he is abſent thirty five days compleatly.

v. 1. *Now had Minerva*, &c.] If this had been related by an hiſtorian, he would have only ſaid that Telemachus judged it neceſſary for his affairs to ſail back to his own country; but a poet ſteps out of the common beaten road, aſcribes the wiſdom of that hero to the goddeſs of it, and introduces her in perſon, to give a dignity to his poetry.

The reader may conſult in general the extracts from Boſſu, (placed before the Odyſſey) concerning machines, or the interpoſition of deities in epic poetry. I will here beg leave to ſet them in a different and more particular light.

It has been imagined that a deity is never to be introduced but when all human means are ineffectual: if this were true, Minerva would be in vain employed in bringing Telemachus back, when a common meſſenger might have anſwered that purpoſe as well as the goddeſs. I doubt not but the verſe of Horace has led many into this error:

"Nec deus interſit niſi dignus vindice nodus."

This rule is to be applied only to the theatre, of which Horace there ſpeaks, and means no more, than when the knot of the play is to be untied, and no other way is left for making the diſcovery, then let a god deſcend and clear the intricacy to the auditors. But as Mr. Dryden obſerves, it has no relation to epic poetry.

It is true, that a deity is never to be introduced upon little and unworthy occaſions; the very deſign of machines is to add weight and dignity to the ſtory, and conſequently an unworthy employment defeats the very intent of them, and debaſes the deities by making them act in offices unworthy of the characters of divine perſonages: but then it is as true, that a poet is at liberty to uſe them for ornament as well as neceſſity. For inſtance, both Virgil and Homer in

Reſtleſs he griev'd, with various fears oppreſt,
And all thy fortunes roll'd within his breaſt.
When, O Telemachus! (the goddeſs ſaid)
Too long in vain, too widely haſt thou ſtray'd.
Thus leaving careleſs thy paternal right
The robbers prize, the prey to lawleſs might,
On fond purſuits neglectful while you roam,
Ev'n now, the hand of rapine ſacks the dome.
Hence to Atrides; and his leave implore
To launch thy veſſel for thy natal ſhore;
Fly, whilſt thy mother virtuous yet withſtands
Her kindred's wiſhes, and her ſire's commands;

their deſcriptions of ſtorms introduce deities, Neptune and Æolus, only to fill our minds with grandeur and terror; for in reality a ſtorm might have happened without a miracle, and Æneas and Ulyſſes both have been driven upon unknown ſhores, by a common ſtorm as well as by the immediate interpoſition of Neptune or Æolus. But machines have a very happy effect; the poet ſeems to converſe with gods, gives ſigns of a divine tranſport, and diſtinguiſhes his poem in all parts from an hiſtory.

v 5. *Beneath the royal portico*, &c.] Minerva here finds Telemachus in bed: it is neceſſary to remember that Ulyſſes landed in Ithaca in the morning of the thirty-fifth day; and when Minerva left him, ſhe went to the Spartan court to Telemachus; this viſion therefore appears to that hero in the night following the thirty-fifth day. On the thirty-ſixth he departs from Menelaus, and lodges that night with Diocles; on the thirty-ſeventh he embarks towards the evening, ſails all night, and lands on the thirty-eighth in the morning in his own country. From this obſervation it is likewiſe evident, that Ulyſſes paſſes two days in diſcourſe with Eumæus, though the poet only diſtinguiſhes the time by the voyage of Telemachus; for the preceding book concludes with the thirty fifth day, and Telemachus ſpends the thirty-ſixth and thirty ſeventh and the following night in his return, and meets Ulyſſes in the morning of the thirty-eighth day. This remark is neceſſary to avoid confuſion, and to make the two ſtories of Ulyſſes and Telemachus coincide, in this and the next book of the Odyſſey.

v. 20. *Her kindred's wiſhes, and her ſire's commands.*] Ovid had theſe lines in his view in his epiſtle of Penelope to Ulyſſes.

"Me pater Icarius video decedere lecto
"Cogit, & immenſas increpat uſque moras."

Thro' both, Eurymachus purſues the dame,
And with the nobleſt gifts aſſerts his claim.
Hence therefore, while thy ſtores thy own remain,
Thou know'ſt the practice of the female train,
Loſt in the children of the preſent ſpouſe,
They ſlight the pledges of their former vows;
Their love is always with the lover paſt;
Still the ſucceeding flame expels the laſt.

But why ſhould Minerva make uſe of theſe arguments, to perſuade Telemachus to return immediately; and give him no information concerning the ſafety of Ulyſſes, who was now actually landed in his own country? The poet reſerves this diſcovery to be made in the future part of the ſtory: if Telemachus had known of his father's being already returned, there could have been no room for the beautiful interview between the father and the ſon; for the doubts and fears, the ſurpriſe and filial tenderneſs, on the part of Telemachus; and for the paternal fondneſs, the yearnings of nature, and the tranſports of joy, on the part of Ulyſſes. Ariſtotle particularly commends this conduct of Homer with reſpect to Ulyſſes. Thoſe diſguiſes and concealments, (ſays that author) perplex the fable with agreeable plots and intricacies, ſurpriſe us with a variety of incidents, and give room for the relation of many adventures; while Ulyſſes ſtill appears in aſſumed characters, and upon every occaſion recites a new hiſtory. At the ſame time the poet excellently ſuſtains his character, which is every where diſtinguiſhed by a wiſe and ready diſſimulation.

v. 24. *Thou know'ſt the practice of the female train.*] This is not ſpoken in derogation of Penelope, nor applied to her in particular; it is laid down as an univerſal maxim, and uttered by the goddeſs of wiſdom: but (ſays Madam Dacier) I wiſh the poet had told us, if the huſbands in his days had better memories toward their departed wives. But what advantage would this be to the fair ſex, if we allow that an huſband may poſſibly forget a former wife? I chuſe rather to congratulate the modern ladies, againſt whom there is not the leaſt objection of this nature. Is it not evident, that all our widows are utterly diſconſolate, appear many months in deep mourning? and whenever they are prevailed upon to a ſecond marriage, do they not chuſe out the ſtrongeſt, beſt built, and moſt vigorous youth of the nation? For what other reaſon but that ſuch conſtitutions may be a ſecurity againſt their ever feeling the like calamity again? What I have here ſaid ſhews that the world is well changed ſince the times of Homer; and however the race of man is dwindled and decayed ſince thoſe ages, yet it is a demonſtration that the modern ladies are not to blame for it.

Let o'er thy houſe ſome choſen maid preſide,
'Till heav'n decrees to bleſs thee in a bride.
But now thy more attentive ears incline,
Obſerve the warnings of a pow'r divine:
For thee their ſnares the ſuitor lords ſhall lay
In Samos' ſands, or ſtraits of Ithaca,
To ſeize thy life ſhall lurk the murd'rous band,
Ere yet thy footſteps preſs thy native land.
No ——— ſooner far their riot and their luſt
All cov'ring earth ſhall bury deep in duſt!
Then diſtant from the ſcatter'd iſlands ſteer,
Nor let the night retard thy full career;
Thy heav'nly guardian ſhall inſtruct the gales
To ſmooth thy paſſage, and ſupply thy ſails:
And when at Ithaca thy labour ends,
Send to the town the veſſel with thy friends;
But ſeek thou firſt the maſter of the ſwine,
(For ſtill to thee his loyal thoughts incline)
There paſs the night: while he his courſe purſues
To bring Penelope the wiſh'd for news,
That thou ſafe ſailing from the Pylian ſtrand
Art come to bleſs her in thy native land.
Thus ſpoke the goddeſs, and reſum'd her flight
To the pure regions of eternal light.
Meanwhile Piſiſtratus he gently ſhakes,
And with theſe words the ſlumb'ring youth awakes.
Riſe, ſon of Neſtor! for the road prepare,
And join the harneſs'd courſers to the car.
What cauſe, he cry'd, can juſtify our flight,
To tempt the dangers of forbidding night?
Here wait we rather, 'till approaching day
Shall prompt our ſpeed, and point the ready way.
Nor think of flight before the Spartan king
Shall bid farewel, and bounteous preſents bring;
Gifts, which to diſtant ages ſafely ſtor'd,
The ſacred act of friendſhip ſhall record.

Thus he. But when the dawn beſtreak'd the eaſt,
The king from Helen roſe, and ſought his gueſt.
As ſoon as his approach the hero knew,
The ſplendid mantle round him firſt he threw,
Then o'er his ample ſhoulders whirl'd the cloak,
Reſpectful met the monarch, and beſpoke.
Hail, great Atrides, favour'd of high Jove!
Let not thy friends in vain for licence move.
Swift let us meaſure back the wat'ry way,
Nor check our ſpeed, impatient of delay.
If with deſire ſo ſtrong thy boſom glows,
Ill, ſaid the king, ſhou'd I thy wiſh oppoſe;
For oft' in others freely I reprove
The ill-tim'd efforts of officious love;
Who love too much, hate in the like extreme,
And both the golden mean alike condemn.
Alike he thwarts the hoſpitable end,
Who drives the free, or ſtays the haſty friend;
True friendſhip's laws are by this rule expreſt,
Welcome the coming, ſpeed the parting gueſt.
Yet ſtay, my friends, and in your chariot take
The nobleſt preſents that our love can make:
Meantime commit we to our women's care
Some choice domeſtic viands to prepare;
The trav'ler riſing from the banquet gay,
Eludes the labours of the tedious way.

v. 84. *Welcome the coming, ſpeed the parting gueſt.*] Homer has here laid together admirable precepts for ſocial life; the paſſage was much admired; Herodotus borrowed it, as we are informed by Euſtathius,

——————τραπέζη
Μειλίξαντ' ἀποπεμψαι ἐπὰν ἐθέλωσι νέεσθαι.

But perhaps Euſtathius quoted by memory, or through inadvertency wrote down Herodotus for Theocritus, in whom theſe lines are to be found:

Μηδὲ ξεινοδόκον κακὸν ἐμμεναι, ἀλλὰ τραπέζα
Μειλίξαντ' ἀπόπεμψαι, ἐπὰν ἐθέλῃ νῦν νέεσθαι.

Then if a wider courſe ſhall rather pleaſe
Thro' ſpacious Argos, and the realms of Greece,
Atrides in his chariot ſhall attend;
Himſelf thy convoy to each royal friend.
No prince will let Ulyſſes' heir remove
Without ſome pledge, ſome monument of love:
Theſe will the caldron, theſe the tripod give,
From thoſe the well-pair'd mules we ſhall receive,
Or bowl emboſs'd whoſe golden figures live.
To whom the youth, for prudence fam'd reply'd,
O monarch, care of heav'n! thy people's pride!
No friend in Ithaca my place ſupplies,
No pow'rful hands are there, no watchful eyes:
My ſtores expos'd and fenceleſs houſe demand
The ſpeedieſt ſuccour from my guardian hand;
Leſt in a ſearch too anxious and too vain
Of one loſt joy, I loſe what yet remain.
His purpoſe when the gen'rous warriour heard,
He charg'd the houſhold cates to be prepar'd.

v. 109. *He charg'd the houſhold cares to be prepar'd.*] It is in the original, "He commanded Helen and her maids" to do it. The moderns have blamed Menelaus for want of delicacy in commanding his queen to perform ſuch houſhold offices. I read ſuch paſſages with pleaſure, becauſe they are exact pictures of antient life: we may as well condemn the firſt inhabitants of the world for want of politeneſs, in living in tents and bowers, and not in palaces. This command of Menelaus agrees with thoſe manners, and with the patriarchal life. Gen. xviii. 6. "Abraham haſtened into his tent, and ſaid unto Sarah "his wife, Make ready quickly three meaſures of fine meal: knead "it, and make cakes upon the hearth."

I doubt not but the continual deſcriptions of entertainments have likewiſe given offence to many; but we may be in ſome degree reconciled to them, if we conſider they are not only inſtances of the hoſpitality of the antients, but of their piety and religion: every meal was a religious act, a ſacrifice, or a feaſt of thankſgiving: libations of wine, and offerings of part of the fleſh, were conſtantly made at every entertainment. This gives a dignity to the deſcription, and when we read it, we are not to conſider it as an act merely of eating or drinking, but as an office of worſhip to the gods.

Now with the dawn, from his adjoining home,
Was Boethœdes Eteonus come;
Swift as the word he forms the riſing blaze,
And o'er the coals the ſmoking fragments lays.
Meantime the king, his ſon, and Helen, went
Where the rich wardrobe breath'd a coſtly ſcent.
The king ſelected from the glitt'ring rows
A bowl; the prince a ſilver beaker choſe.
The beauteous queen revolv'd with careful eyes
Her various textures of unnumber'd dyes,
And choſe the largeſt; with no vulgar art
Her own fair hands embroider'd ev'ry part:
Beneath the reſt it lay divinely bright,
Like radiant Heſper o'er the gems of night.
Then with each gift they haſten'd to their gueſt,
And thus the king Ulyſſes' heir addreſt.
Since fix'd are thy reſolves, may thund'ring Jove
With happieſt omens thy deſires approve!
This ſilver bowl, whoſe coſtly margins ſhine
Enchas'd with gold, this valu'd gift be thine;

This is a note of the critics; but perhaps the ſame thing might as well be ſaid of our modern entertainments, wherever the good practice of ſaying grace before and after meat is not yet laid aſide.

v. 123. *Like radiant Heſper o'er the gems of night.*] If this paſſage were tranſlated literally, it would ſtand thus, "Helen choſe a veſ-"ture of moſt beautiful embroidery, and of the largeſt extent, a "veſture that lay beneath the reſt." We are to underſtand by the laſt circumſtance, that this veſture was the choiceſt of her wardrobe, it being repoſited with the greateſt care, or νείατος ἄλλων. The verſes are taken from lib. vi. of the Iliad. This robe was the work of Helen's own hands; an inſtance that in thoſe days a great lady, or a great beauty, might be a good workwoman: and ſhe here ſeems to take particular care to obviate an opinion one might otherwiſe have, that ſhe did not apply herſelf to thoſe works till her beſt days were paſt. We are told in the Iliad,

Her in the palace, at her loom ſhe found,
The golden web her own ſad ſtory crown'd:
The Trojan wars ſhe weav'd, herſelf the prize,
And the dire triumphs of her fatal eyes.

To me this preſent, of Vulcanian frame,
From Sidon's hoſpitable monarch came;
To thee we now conſign the precious load,
The pride of kings, and labour of a god.
Then gave the cup; while Megapenthe brought
The ſilver vaſe with living ſculpture wrought.
The beauteous queen advancing next, diſplay'd
The ſhining veil, and thus endearing ſaid.
Accept, dear youth, this monument of love,
Long ſince, in better days, by Helen wove:
Safe in thy mother's care the veſture lay,
To deck thy bride and grace thy nuptial day.
Meantime may'ſt thou with happieſt ſpeed regain
Thy ſtately palace, and thy wide domain.
She ſaid, and gave the veil; with grateful look
The prince the variegated preſent took.
And now, when thro' the royal dome they paſs'd,
High on a throne the king each ſtranger plac'd.
A golden ew'r th' attendant damſel brings,
Replete with water from the cryſtal ſprings;
With copious ſtreams the ſhining vaſe ſupplies
A ſilver laver of capacious ſize.
They waſh. The tables in fair order ſpread,
The glitt'ring caniſters are crown'd with bread;
Viands of various kinds allure the taſte
Of choiceſt ſort and ſavour; rich repaſt;
Whilſt Eteoneus portions out the ſhares,
Atrides' ſon the purple draught prepares.
And now (each fated with the genial feaſt,
And the ſhort rage of thirſt and hunger ceaſt)
Ulyſſes' ſon, with his illuſtrious friend,
The horſes join, the poliſh'd car aſcend.
Along the court the fiery ſteeds rebound,
And the wide portal echoes to the ſound.
The king precedes; a bowl with fragrant wine
(Libation deſtin'd to the pow'rs divine)

His right-hand held: before the ſteeds he ſtands,
Then, mix'd with pray'rs, he utters theſe commands.
Farewel and proſper, youths! let Neſtor know
What grateful thoughts ſtill in this boſom glow,
For all the proofs of his paternal care,
Thro' the long dangers of the ten years war.
Ah! doubt not our report (the prince rejoin'd)
Of all the virtues of thy generous mind.
And oh! return'd might we Ulyſſes meet!
To him thy preſents ſhew, thy words repeat:
How will each ſpeech his grateful wonder raiſe?
How will each gift indulge us in thy praiſe?
Scarce ended thus the prince, when on the right
Advanc'd the bird of Jove: auſpicious ſight!
A milk-white fowl his clinching talons bore,
With care domeſtic pamper'd at the floor.
Peaſants in vain with threat'ning cries purſue,
In ſolemn ſpeed the bird majeſtic flew
Full dexter to the car: the proſp'rous ſight
Fill'd every breaſt with wonder and delight.
But Neſtor's ſon the chearful ſilence broke,
And in theſe words the Spartan chief beſpoke.

v. 174. *And oh! return'd might we Ulyſſes meet!* &c.] It is not impoſſible but a falſe reading may have crept into the text in this verſe. In the preſent edition it ſtands thus:

——————αἴ γὰρ ἐγὼν ὣς
Νοστήσας, Ἰθάκην δε κιὼν, Ὀδυσεῖ ἐνὶ οἴκῳ
Εἴποιμ'. ——————

The ſenſe will be leſs intricate, and the conſtruction more eaſy, if inſtead of κιὼν we inſert κιχὼν and read the line thus pointed.

Νοστήσας Ἰθάκην δε, κιχὼν Ὀδυσεῖ ἐνὶ οἴκῳ
Εἴποιμ'.

Then the verſe will have this import, "O may I, upon my re-"turn to Ithaca, finding Ulyſſes in his palace, give him an account "of their friendſhip!" whereas in the common editions there is a tautology, and either κιὼν or νοστήσας muſt be allowed to be a ſuperfluity.

Say if to us the gods theſe omens ſend,
Or fates peculiar to thyſelf portend?
Whilſt yet the monarch paus'd, with doubts oppreſt,
The beauteous queen reliev'd his lab'ring breaſt.
Hear me, ſhe cry'd, to whom the gods have giv'n
To read this ſign, and myſtic ſenſe of heav'n.
As thus the plumy ſov'reign of the air
Left on the mountain's brow his callow care,
And wander'd thro' the wide æthereal way
To pour his wrath on yon' luxurious prey;

v 192. *Hear me, ſhe cry'd,* &c.] It is not clear why the poet aſcribes a greater quickneſs and penetration to Helen in the ſolution of this prodigy, than to Menelaus. Is it, as Euſtathius aſſerts, from a ſuperior acuteneſs of nature and preſence of mind in the fair ſex? Or is it, that Helen in this reſembles ſome modern beauties, who (though their huſbands be aſked the queſtion) will make the anſwer themſelves? I would willingly believe that Helen might happen to ſtand in ſuch a poſition, as to be able to make more minute obſervation upon the flight of the eagle, than Menelaus; and being more circumſtantial in the obſervation, ſhe might for that reaſon be more ready and circumſtantial in the interpretation. But Homer himſelf tells us, that ſhe received it from the gods. This is a pious leſſon, to teach us in general, that all knowledge is the gift of God, and perhaps here particularly inſerted to raiſe the character of Helen, and make us leſs ſurpriſed to ſee her forgiven by Menelaus, when ſhe is not only pardoned, but favoured thus with inſpiration. And indeed it was neceſſary to reconcile us to this fatal beauty; at whom the reader is naturally enough offended: ſhe is an actreſs in many of the ſcenes of the Odyſſey, and conſequently to be redeemed from contempt: this is done by degrees; the poet ſteals away the adultreſs from our view, to ſet before us the amiable penitent.

v. 194. *As thus the plumy ſov'reign,* &c.] Ulyſſes is the eagle, the bird repreſents the ſuitors: the cries of the men and women when the eagle ſeized his prey, denote the lamentations of the relations of the ſuitors, who are ſlain by Ulyſſes. The circumſtance of the flight of the eagle cloſe to the horſes, is added to ſhew that the prodigy had a fixed and certain reference to a perſon preſent; namely Telemachus: the eagle comes ſuddenly from a mountain; this means that Ulyſſes ſhall unexpectedly arrive from the country to the ſuitors deſtruction. The fowl is ſaid to be fed by the family, this is a full deſignation of the ſuitors, who feed upon Ulyſſes, and prey upon his family. And as this bird is killed by the talons of the eagle, ſo the ſuitors fall by the ſpear of Ulyſſes. Euſtathius.

So ſhall thy god-like father, toſs'd in vain
Thro' all the dangers of the boundleſs main,
Arrive, (or is perchance already come)
From ſlaughter'd gluttons to releaſe the dome.
Oh! if this promis'd bliſs by thund'ring Jove,
(The prince reply'd) ſtand fix'd in fate above;
To thee, as to ſome god, I'll temples raiſe,
And crown thy altars with the coſtly blaze.
He ſaid; and bending o'er his chariot, flung
Athwart the fiery ſteeds the ſmarting thong;
The bounding ſhafts upon the harneſs play,
Till night deſcending intercepts the way,
To Diocleus, at Pheræ, they repair,
Whoſe boaſted ſire was ſacred Alpheus' heir;
With him all night the youthful ſtrangers ſtay'd,
Nor found the hoſpitable rites unpay'd.
But ſoon as morning from her orient bed
Had ting'd the mountains with her earlieſt red,
They join'd the ſteeds, and on the chariot ſprung;
The brazen portals in their paſſage rung.
To Pylos ſoon they came; when thus begun
To Neſtor's heir Ulyſſes' god-like ſon:
Let not Piſiſtratus in vain be preſt,
Nor unconſenting hear his friend's requeſt;
His friend by long hereditary claim,
In toils his equal, and in years the ſame.
No farther from our veſſel, I implore,
The courſers drive; but laſh them to the ſhore.
Too long thy father would his friend detain;
I dread his proffer'd kindneſs, urg'd in vain.

v. 226. *Too long thy father would his friend detain.*] This has been objected againſt, as contrary to the promiſe of Telemachus, who aſſured Menelaus that he would "acquaint Neſtor with his great "friendſhip and hoſpitality:" is he therefore not guilty of falſhood, by embarking immediately without fulfilling his promiſe? Euſtathius anſwers, that the prodigy of the eagle occaſions this alteration, and that the not fulfilling his promiſe is to be aſcribed to accident and

The hero paus'd, and ponder'd this requeſt,
While love and duty warr'd within his breaſt.
At length reſolv'd, he turn'd his ready hand,
And laſh'd his panting courſers to the ſtrand.
There, while within the poop with care he ſtor'd
The regal preſents of the Spartan lord;
With ſpeed be gone, (ſaid he) call ev'ry mate,
Ere yet to Neſtor I the tale relate:
'Tis true, the fervour of his gen'rous heart
Brooks no repulſe, nor could'ſt thou ſoon depart;
Himſelf will ſeek thee here, nor wilt thou find,
In words alone, the Pylian monarch kind.
But when arriv'd he thy return ſhall know,
How will his breaſt with honeſt fury glow?
This ſaid, the ſounding ſtrokes his horſes fire,
And ſoon he reach'd the palace of his ſire.
Now, (cry'd Telemachus) with ſpeedy care
Hoiſe ev'ry ſail, and ev'ry oar prepare.
Swift as the word his willing mates obey,
And ſeize their ſeats, impatient for the ſea.
Meantime the prince with ſacrifice adores
Minerva, and her guardian aid implores;
When lo! a wretch ran breathleſs to the ſhore,
New from his crime, and reeking yet with gore.

neceſſity. But the words of Telemachus ſufficiently juſtify his veracity; they are of the plural number καταλέξομεν, "I and Piſiſtra-"tus will inform Neſtor of your hoſpitality:" this promiſe he leaves to be performed by Piſiſtratus, who returns directly to Neſtor. Others blame Telemachus as unpolite, in leaving Neſtor without any acknowledgment for his civilities. Dacier has recourſe to the command of Minerva, and to the prodigy of the eagle, for his vindication: he is commanded by the gods to return immediately; and therefore not blameable for complying with their injunctions. But perhaps it is a better reaſon to ſay, that the nature of the poem requires ſuch a conduct; the action of the Odyſſey ſtands ſtill till the return of Telemachus, (whatever happens to him in Pyle being foreign to it) and therefore Homer ſhews his judgment, in precipitating the actions of Telemachus, rather than trifling away the time, while the ſtory ſleeps, only to ſhew a piece of complaiſance and ceremony.

A ſeer he was, from great Melampus ſprung,
Melampus, who in Pylos flouriſh'd long,
'Till urg'd by wrongs a foreign realm he choſe,
Far from the hateful cauſe of all his woes.
Neleus his treaſures one long year detains;
As long, he groan'd in Phylacus's chains:
Meantime, what anguiſh and what rage, combin'd,
For lovely Pero rack'd his lab'ring mind!
Yet 'ſcap'd he death; and vengeful of his wrong
To Pylos drove the lowing herds along:
Then (Neleus vanquiſh'd, and conſign'd the fair
To Bias' arms) he ſought a foreign air;
Argos the rich for his retreat he choſe,
There form'd his empire; there his palace roſe.
From him Antiphates and Mantius came:
The firſt begot Oiclus great in fame,
And he Amphiaraus, immortal name!
The people's ſaviour, and divinely wiſe,
Belov'd by Jove, and him who gilds the ſkies,
Yet ſhort his date of life! by female pride he dies.

v. 252. ——— *From great Melampus ſprung.*] There is ſome obſcurity in this genealogical hiſtory. Melampus was a prophet, he lived in Pylos, and was a perſon of great wealth; his uncle Neleus ſeized his riches, and detained them a whole year, to oblige him to recover his herds detained by Iphyclus in Phylace; he failed in the attempt, and was kept in priſon by Iphyclus, the ſon of Phylacus. Bias, the brother of Melampus, was in love with Pero the daughter of Neleus; Neleus, to engage Melampus more ſtrongly in the enterpriſe, promiſes to give Pero in marriage to his brother Bias, upon recovery of his herds from Iphyclus. At length Iphyclus releaſes Melampus from priſon, upon his diſcovering to him how he might have an heir to ſucceed to his dominions, and rewards him with reſtoring the herds of Neleus: then Neleus retracts his promiſe, and refuſes to give his daughter Pero to Bias the brother of Melampus; upon this Neleus and Melampus quarrel, and engaging in a ſingle combat, Neleus is vanquiſhed, and Melampus retires to Argos. See lib. xi. v. 350, &c. and the note.

v. 270. *Belov'd by Jove, and him who gilds the ſkies,*
Yet ſhort his date of life! by female pride he dies.]

The poet means Eryphyle, who, being bribed with a golden brace-

From Mantius Clitus, whom Aurora's love
Snatch'd for his beauty to the thrones above:
And Polyphides on whom Phœbus ſhone
With fulleſt rays, Amphiaraus now gone;
In Hypereſia's groves he made abode,
And taught mankind the counſels of the god.

let by Polynices, perſuaded her huſband Amphiaraus to go to the Theban war, where he loſt his life. This is a remarkable paſſage: "Though he was loved by Jupiter and Apollo, yet he reached not "to old age." Is a ſhort life the greateſt inſtance of the love of the gods? Plato quotes the verſe to this purpoſe. "The life of "man is ſo loaded with calamity, that it is an inſtance of the fa- "vour of heaven to take the burthen from us with ſpeed." The ſame author in Axiochus (if that dialogue be his) aſſerts, that the gods, having a perfect inſight into human affairs, take ſpeedily to themſelves thoſe whom they love. Thus when Trophonius and Agamedes, had built a temple to Apollo, they prayed to receive a bleſſing the moſt beneficial to mankind: the god granted their prayers, and they were both found dead the next morning. Thus likewiſe the prieſteſs of Juno, when her two ſons had yoked themſelves to her chariot, and drawn her for the greater expedition to the temple, prayed to the goddeſs to reward their filial piety; and they both died that night. This agrees with the expreſſion of Menander, He whom the gods love dies young.

Ὃν οἱ θεοὶ φιλοῦσιν ἀποθνήσκει νέος.

v. 272. ——— —— *Aurora's love*
Snatch'd for his beauty to the thrones above.

There is nothing more common than ſuch accounts of men being carried away by goddeſſes, in all the Greek poets; and yet what offends more againſt credibility? The poet invented theſe fables merely out of compliment to the dead. When any perſon happened to be drowned in a river; if a man, ſome water-nymph ſtole him; if a woman, ſhe was ſeized to be the wife of the river god. If any were loſt at ſea, Neptune or ſome of the ſea gods or goddeſſes had taken them to their beds. But to ſpeak to the preſent purpoſe; if any perſon died in the fields, and his body happened not to be found, if he was murdered and buried, or devoured by wild beaſts, ſo that no account was heard of his death, he was immediately imagined to be taken from the earth by ſome deity who was in love with his beauty. Thus Clitus being loſt in his morning ſports, like Orion while he was hunting, he was fabled to be carried to heaven by Aurora; being loſt at the time of the morning, over which that deity preſides.

From him ſprung Theoclymenus, who found
(The ſacred wine yet foaming on the ground)
Telemachus: whom, as to heav'n he preſt
His ardent vows, the ſtranger thus addreſt.

O thou! that doſt thy happy courſe prepare
With pure libations, and with ſolemn pray'r;
By that dread pow'r to whom thy vows are paid;
By all the lives of theſe; thy own dear head,
Declare ſincerely to no foe's demand
Thy name, thy lineage, and paternal land.

v. 278. *From him ſprung Theoclymenus,*——] We have had a long genealogical digreſſion to introduce Theoclymenus: I fear the whole paſſage will prove diſtaſteful to an Engliſh palate, it not being capable of any ornaments of poetry. I could wiſh Homer had omitted or ſhortened ſuch paſſages, though they might be uſeful in his age; for by ſuch honourable inſertions he made his court to the beſt families in Greece. It is true the ſtory is told conciſely, and this occaſions ſome obſcurity; diſtance of time as well as place, makes us ſee all objects confuſedly and indiſtinctly. In the days of Homer theſe ſtories were univerſally known, and conſequently wanted no explication; the obſcurity therefore is not to be charged upon Homer, but to time, which has defaced and worn away ſome parts of the impreſſion, and made the image leſs diſcernible.

The uſe the poet makes of the adventure of Theoclymenus, is to give encouragement to Telemachus: he aſſiſts with his advice, and by his gift of prophecy explains to him a prodigy in the concluſion of his book. By this means he connects it with the main action, in giving Telemachus aſſurances that his affairs haſten to a re-eſtabliſhment. Beſides, theſe ſhort relations are valuable, as they convey to poſterity brief hiſtories of antient facts and families that are extant no where elſe.

v. 287. *Declare—thy name and lineage,* &c] Theſe queſtions may be thought ſomewhat extraordinary; for what apparent reaſon is there for this fugitive to be told the name of the parents of Telemachus? But the interrogations are not very material; he makes them to learn if Telemachus or his father are friends to the perſon ſlain by his hand? if they were, inſtead of ſailing with him, he would have reaſon to fly from him, as from a perſon who might take away his life by the laws of the country. Thus in the Hebrew law, Numb. xxxv. 19. "The revenger of blood, (ὁ ἀγχιστεύων, or propinquus) "ſhall ſlay the murderer, when he meeteth him." But the Jews had cities of refuge, to which the murderers fled as to a ſanctuary: The Greeks in like manner, if the homicide fled into a voluntary exile, permitted him to be in ſecurity till the murder was atoned, either by

Prepare then, ſaid Telemachus, to know
A tale from falſhood free, not free from woe.
From Ithaca, of royal birth I came,
And great Ulyſſes (ever honour'd name!)
Was once my ſire: tho, now for ever loſt
In Stygian gloom he glides a penſive ghoſt!
Whoſe fate enquiring, thro' the world we rove;
The laſt, the wretched proof of filial love.
The ſtranger then. Nor ſhall I aught conceal,
But the dire ſecret of my fate reveal.
Of my own tribe an Argive wretch I ſlew;
Whoſe pow'rful friends the luckleſs deed purſue
With unrelenting rage, and force from home
The blood-ſtain'd exile, ever doom'd to roam.
But bear, oh bear me o'er yon' azure flood;
Receive the ſuppliant! ſpare my deſtin'd blood!
Stranger (reply'd the prince) ſecurely reſt
Affianc'd in our faith; henceforth our gueſt.
Thus affable, Ulyſſes' god-like heir
Takes from the ſtranger's hand the glitt'ring ſpear:
He climbs the ſhip, aſcends the ſtern with haſte,
And by his ſide the gueſt accepted plac'd.
The chief his orders gives: th' obedient band
With due obſervance wait the chief's command:

fulfilling a certain time of baniſhment, or by a pecuniary mulct or expiation.

I will only further remark the conciſeneſs of theſe interrogations of Theoclymenus; he aſks four queſtions in a breath, in the compaſs of one line; his apprehenſions of being purſued give him no leiſure to expatiate. Homer judiciouſly adapts his poetry to the circumſtances of the murderer, a man in fear being in great haſte to be in ſecurity. Telemachus anſwers with equal brevity, being under a neceſſity to finiſh his voyage in the night to avoid the ambuſh of the ſuitors. For this reaſon Homer ſhortens the relation, and complies with the exigency of Telemachus: with this further view; to unite the ſubordinate ſtory of Telemachus with that of Ulyſſes, it being neceſſary to haſten to the chief action, and without delay carry on the main deſign of the Odyſſey in the re-eſtabliſhment of Ulyſſes.

With ſpeed the maſt they rear, with ſpeed unbind
The ſpacious ſheet, and ſtretch it to the wind.
Minerva calls; the ready gales obey
With rapid ſpeed to whirl them o'er the ſea.
Crunus they paſs'd, next Chalcis roll'd away,
When thick'ning darkneſs clos'd the doubtful day;

v. 316. *Crunus they paſs'd, next Chalcis*——&c.] This whole paſſage has been greatly corrupted; one line is omitted in all our editions of Homer, and the verſes themſelves are printed erroneouſly: for thus they ſtand, lib. viii. p. 539. of Strabo's geography.

Βᾶν δὲ παρὰ Κρόνυς, καὶ Χαλκίδα καλλιρέεθρον,
Δύσσετό τ' ἠέλιος σκιόωντο τε πᾶσαι ἀγυιαί,
Ἣ δὲ Φεὰς ἐπέβαλλεν ἀγαλλομένη διὸς ὥρῃ.

The firſt line is added from Strabo: thus in Latin,

"Præterierunt Crunos, & Chalcida fluentis amœnam."

He writes ἀγαλλομένη for ἐπειγομένη: and φεάς inſtead of φερὰς. The courſe that Telemachus ſteered is thus explained by the ſame author: he firſt ſailed northwardly as far as Elis, then he turned towards the eaſt, avoiding the direct courſe to Ithaca, to eſcape the ambuſh of the ſuitors, who lay between Samos and Ithaca. Then he paſſed the Echinades (called Θοαί, that is ὀξεῖαι, or "ſharp-pointed," by Homer. See Strabo, lib. x. They are called Oxias by Pliny) lying near the gulf of Corinth, and the mouths of Achelous; thus leaving Ithaca, on the eaſt, and paſſing it, he alters his courſe again, ſails northwardly between Ithaca and Acarnania, and lands on the coaſt oppoſite to the Cephallenian ocean, where the ſuitors formed their ambuſh. The places mentioned by Homer lie in this order, Cruni, Chalcis, and Phæa: and are all rivers of ſmall note, or rather brooks, as Strabo expreſſes it: ἀδόξων ποταμῶν ὀνόματα, μᾶλλον δὲ Ὀχέτων.

It is highly probable that Phæa, and not Pheræ, is the true reading, for Pheræ lay in Meſſenia, and not in Elis, as Strabo writes, and was in poſſeſſion of Agamemnon; for he mentions that city amongſt the ſeven which he promiſes Achilles, in the ninth book of the Iliad.

Sev'n ample cities ſhall confeſs thy ſway,
Thee Enope, and Pheræ thee obey.

If it had not been under his dominion, how could he transfer the right to Achilles? Beſides, it would be abſurd to join Pheræ directly with Chalcis, when the one was in Meſſenia, the other in Elis; this would make the courſe of Telemachus's navigation unintelligible, if Elis and Meſſenia were confounded in the relation, and uſed promiſcuouſly without order or regularity.

The ſilver Phæa's glitt'ring rills they loſt,
And ſkimm'd along by Elis' ſacred coaſt.
Then cautious thro' the rocky reaches wind,
And turning ſudden, ſhun the death deſign'd.
Meantime the king, Eumæus, and the reſt,
Sat in the cottage, at their rural feaſt:
The banquet paſt, and ſatiate ev'ry man,
To try his hoſt Ulyſſes thus began.
Yet one night more, my friends, indulge your gueſt;
The laſt I purpoſe in your walls to reſt:
To-morrow for myſelf I muſt provide,
And only aſk your counſel, and a guide:
Patient to roam the ſtreet, by hunger led,
And bleſs the friendly hand that gives me bread.
There in Ulyſſes' roof I may relate
Ulyſſes' wand'rings to his royal mate;
Or mingling with the ſuitors haughty train,
Not undeſerving, ſome ſupport obtain.
Hermes to me his various gifts imparts,
Patron of induſtry and manual arts:

I will only add that Strabo in the xxth book of his Geography, inſtead of Καλλιςέθεον, reads πετρηέσσαν, perhaps through a ſlip of his memory.

v. 336. *Hermes to me his various gifts imparts,*
Patron of induſtry and manual arts.]

Mercury was the ſervant and miniſter of the gods, and was feigned to be the patron of all perſons of the like ſtation upon earth, it was ſuppoſed to be by his favour that all ſervants and attendants were ſucceſsful in their ſeveral functions. In this view the connexion will be eaſy. "I will go (ſays Ulyſſes) and offer my ſervice to the ſuitors, and by "the favour of Mercury who gives ſucceſs to perſons of my condition, "ſhall proſper; for no man is better able to execute the offices of at-"tendance, than myſelf." It may be objected, that theſe functions are unworthy of the character, and beneath the dignity of an hero; but Ulyſſes is obliged to act in his aſſumed, not real character; as a beggar, not as a king. Athenæus (lib. i. p. 18.) vindicates Ulyſſes in another manner. "Men (ſays he) in former ages performed "their own offices, and gloried in their dexterity in ſuch employment.

Few can with me in dext'rous works contend,
The pyre to build, the ſtubborn oak to rend;
To turn the taſteful viand o'er the flame;
Or foam the goblet with a purple ſtream.
Such are the taſks of men of mean eſtate,
Whom fortune dooms to ſerve the rich and great.
Alas! (Eumæus with a ſigh rejoin'd)
How ſprung a thought ſo monſtrous in thy mind?
If on that god-leſs race thou wouldſt attend,
Fate owes thee ſure a miſerable end!
Their wrongs and blaſphemies aſcend the ſky,
And pull deſcending vengeance from on high.
Not ſuch, my friend, the ſervants of their feaſt;
A blooming train in rich embroid'ry dreſt,
With earth's whole tribute the bright table bends,
And ſmiling round celeſtial youth attends.
Stay then: no eye aſkance beholds thee here;
Sweet is thy converſe to each ſocial ear;
Well pleas'd, and pleaſing, in our cottage reſt,
'Till good Telemachus accepts his gueſt,
With genial gifts, and change of fair attires,
And ſafe conveys thee where thy ſoul deſires.
To him the man of woes. O gracious Jove!
Reward this ſtranger's hoſpitable love,

" Thus Homer deſcribes Ulyſſes as the moſt dextrous man living, in " ordering wood for the fire, and in the arts of cookery." But it is no more derogation to him to put on the appearance of a beggar, than it was to Pallas to aſſume that of a ſwain, as ſhe frequently does throughout the Odyſſey.

v. 348. *Their wrongs and blaſphemies aſcend the ſky*] The ſenſe of this paſſage appears to me very obvious; Dacier renders it, " whoſe " violence and inſolence is ſo great that they regard not the gods, and that they attack even the heavens." I ſhould rather chuſe to underſtand the words in the more plain and eaſy conſtruction: Grotius is of this judgment, and thinks they bear the ſame import as theſe in Gen. xviii. 21. " I will go down and ſee if they have done according to the cry which is come unto heaven; and indeed there is a great ſimilitude between the expreſſions.

Who knows the ſon of ſorrow to relieve,
Chears the ſad heart, nor lets affliction grieve.
Of all the ills unhappy mortals know,
A life of wand'rings is the greateſt woe:
On all their weary ways wait care and pain,
And pine and penury, a meagre train.
To ſuch a man ſince harbour you afford,
Relate the farther fortunes of your lord;
What cares his mother's tender breaſt engage,
And ſire, forſaken on the verge of age;
Beneath the ſun prolong they yet their breath,
Or range the houſe of darkneſs and of death?
To whom the ſwain. Attend what you enquire,
Laertes lives, the miſerable ſire,
Lives, but implores of ev'ry pow'r to lay
The burden down, and wiſhes for the day.
Torn from his offspring in the eve of life,
Torn from th' embraces of his tender wife,

v. 370. *What cares his mother's tender breaſt engage,*
And ſire, forſaken on the verge of age.]

Theſe queſtions may ſeem to be needleſs, becauſe Ulyſſes had been fully acquainted with the ſtory of Laertes, and the death of his mother Anticlea, by the ſhade of Tireſias: but Ulyſſes perſonates a ſtranger, and to carry on that character, pretends to be unacquainted with all the affairs of his own family. I cannot affirm that ſuch frequent repetitions of the ſame circumſtances are beautiful in Homer; the retirement of Laertes has been frequently mentioned, and the death of Anticlea related in other parts of the Odyſſey; however neceſſary ſuch reiterated accounts may be, I much queſtion whether they will prove entertaining; Homer himſelf in this place ſeems to apprehend it, for Eumæus paſſes over the queſtions made by Ulyſſes with a very ſhort anſwer, and enlarges upon other circumſtances, relating to his family and affairs, to give (as Euſtathius obſerves) variety to his poetry. But this conduct is very judicious upon another account: it lets Ulyſſes into the knowledge of his condition, and by it he is able to take his meaſures with the greater certainty, in order to bring about his own re-eſtabliſhment. This is a demonſtration that the objection of Rapin is without foundation; he calls theſe interviews between Ulyſſes and Eumæus mere idle fables, invented ſolely for amuſement, and contributing nothing to the action of the Odyſſey; but the contrary is true, for Ulyſſes directs his courſe according to theſe informations.

Sole, and all comfortleſs, he waſtes away
Old age, untimely poſting ere his day.
She too, ſad mother! for Ulyſſes loſt
Pin'd out her bloom, and vaniſh'd to a ghoſt.
(So dire a fate, ye righteous gods! avert,
From ev'ry friendly, ev'ry feeling heart!)
While yet ſhe was, tho' clouded o'er with grief,
Her pleaſing converſe miniſter'd relief:
With Crimene, her youngeſt daughter, bred,
One roof contain'd us, and one table fed.
But when the ſoftly-ſtealing pace of time
Crept on from childhood into youthful prime,
To Samos' iſle ſhe ſent the wedded fair;
Me to the fields, to tend the rural care;
Array'd in garments her own hands had wove,
Nor leſs the darling object of her love.
Her hapleſs death my brighter days o'ercaſt,
Yet providence deſerts me not at laſt;
My preſent labours food and drink procure,
And more, the pleaſure to relieve the poor.
Small is the comfort from the queen to hear
Unwelcome news, or vex the royal ear;

v. 399. *And more, the pleaſure to relieve the poor.*] This verſe,

Τῶν ἐφαγόμην', ἐπιόντε, καὶ αἰδοίοισιν ἔδωκα.

has been traduced into the utmoſt obſcenity; Euſtathius vindicates the expreſſion: it means, "I have ſuſtained myſelf with meat and drink by "an honeſt induſtry, and have got wherewithal to relieve virtue that "wants." He interprets αἰδοίοισιν, by ἀνδράσιν αἰδοῦς ἀξίοις, or, "men worthy of regard and honour:" ξένοις ἢ ἱκέταις. The following words.

——— Οὐ μείλιχόν ἐστιν ἀκοῦσαι
Οὔτ' ἔπος, οὔτέ τι ἔργον ———

are capable of a double conſtruction, and imply either that "I take no "delight in hearing of Penelope, ſhe being in diſtreſs, and the power "of the ſuitors;" or that the ſuitors ſo beſiege the palace, that "it "is impoſſible for me to hear one gentle word from Penelope, or re- "ceive one obliging action from her hand." The preference is ſubmitted to the reader's judgment; they both contain images of tenderneſs and humanity.

Blank and diſcountenanc'd the ſervants ſtand,
Nor dare to queſtion where the proud command:
No profit ſprings beneath uſurping pow'rs;
Want feeds not there, where luxury devours,
Nor harbours charity where riot reigns:
Proud are the lords, and wretched are the ſwains.
The ſuff'ring chief at this began to melt;
And, oh Eumæus! thou (he cries) haſt felt
The ſpite of fortune too! her cruel hand
Snatch'd thee an infant from thy native land!
Snatch'd from thy parents arms, thy parents eyes,
To early wants! a man of miſeries!
Thy whole ſad ſtory, from its firſt, declare:
Sunk the fair city by the rage of war,
Where once thy parents dwelt? or did they keep,
In humbler life, the lowing herds and ſheep?
So left perhaps to tend the fleecy train,
Rude pirates ſeiz'd, and ſhipp'd thee o'er the main?
Doom'd a fair prize to grace ſome prince's board,
The worthy purchaſe of a foreign lord.
If then my fortunes can delight my friend,
A ſtory fruitful of events, attend:
Another's ſorrow may thy ear enjoy,
And wine the lengthen'd intervals employ.
Long nights the now declining year beſtows;
A part we conſecrate to ſoft repoſe,
A part in pleaſing talk we entertain;
For too much reſt itſelf becomes a pain.

v. 426. *Long nights the now declining year beſtows*, &c.] From hence we may conclude, that the return of Ulyſſes was probably in the decline of the year, in the latter part of the autumn, and not in the ſummer; the nights then being ſhort cannot be called Νύκτες ἀθήσφατοι. Euſtathius.

v. 429. ——*Too much reſt itſelf becomes a pain.*] This aphoriſm is agreeable to nature and experience; the ſame thing is aſſerted by Hippocrates, "ſleep or watchfulneſs, when exceſſive, become diſeaſes;" too much ſleep occaſions an exceſs of perſpiration, and conſequently weakens and diſſipates the animal ſpirits. Dacier.

Let thoſe, whom ſleep invites, the call obey,
Their cares reſuming with the dawning day:
Here let us feaſt, and to the feaſt be join'd
Diſcourſe, the ſweeter banquet of the mind;
Review the ſeries of our lives, and taſte
The melancholy joy of evils paſt:
For he who much has ſuffer'd, much will know;
And pleas'd remembrance builds delight on woe.
Above Ortygia lies an iſle of fame,
Far hence remote, and Syria is the name;
(There curious eyes inſcrib'd with wonder trace
The ſun's diurnal, and his annual race)

v. 434. ——— *and taſte*
The melancholy joys of evils paſt.]

There is undoubtedly a great pleaſure in the remembrance of paſt ſufferings: nay, calamity has this advantage over proſperity; an evil when paſt turns into a comfort; but a paſt pleaſure though innocent, leaves in its room an anxiety for the want of it, and if it be a guilty pleaſure, a remorſe. The reaſon (obſerves Euſtathius) why paſt evils delight, is from the conſciouſneſs of the praiſe due to our prudence, and patience under them, from the ſenſe of our felicity in being delivered from them, and from gratitude to divine providence, which has delivered us. It is the joy of good men to believe themſelves the favourites of heaven.

v. 438. *Ortygia.*] This is an antient name of Delos, ſo called from ὄρτυξ, a quail, from the great numbers of thoſe birds found upon that iſland. Lycophron, in his obſcure way of writing calls it ὄρτυξ πτερυμένη, or the winged quail; perhaps from the fable of Aſteria being turned into that bird in her flight from Jupiter, and giving name to the iſland from the transformation ſhe ſuffered upon it. It is one of the Cyclades, and lies in the Ægean ocean. Syria, or Syros, is another ſmall iſland lying eaſtward of Ithaca, according to true geography.

v. 440. *There curious eyes inſcrib'd with wonder trace*
The ſun's diurnal, and his annual race]

The words in Homer are τροπαὶ ἠελίοιο, or "ſolis converſiones." Monſieur Perrault inſults the poet as ignorant of geography, for placing Syros under the Tropick; an errour (ſays he) which commentators in vain have laboured to defend, by having recourſe to a ſun-dial of Pherecydes on which the motions of the ſun (the τροπαὶ ἠελίοιο) were deſigned. The laſt defence would indeed be ridiculous, ſince Pherecydes flouriſhed three hundred years after the time of Homer: no one (replies Monſieur Boileau) was ever at any difficulty about the ſenſe of this

Not large, but fruitful; ſtor'd with graſs to keep
The bellowing oxen, and the bleating ſheep;

paſſage; Euſtathius proves that τρέπεσθαι ſignifies the ſame as δύνειν, and denotes the ſetting of the ſun; ſo that the words mean, that Syros is ſituate above Ortygia, on that ſide where the ſun ſets, or weſterly, πρὸς τὰ δυτικὰ μέρη τῆς Ὀρτυγίας. It is true, Euſtathius mentions a bower, Σπήλαιον, in which the converſions of the ſun were figured. This indeed would fully vindicate Homer; but Bochart and others affirm, that Euſtathius is in an errour, and that Syros is ſo far from lying to the weſt, or πρὸς τροπὰς ἡελίοιο, that it bears an eaſtern poſition both with reſpect to Ithaca and Delos: how is this objection to be anſwered? Bochart, p. 411. of his Geographia ſacra, explains it by having recourſe to the bower mentioned by Euſtathius, in which the motions of the ſun were drawn. Pherecydes (ſays Heſychius Mileſius) having collected the writings of the Phœnicians, from the uſe of them alone without any inſtructor, became famous in the world by the ſtrength of his own genius: and Laertius writes, that an Heliotrope made by him was preſerved in the iſland of Syros. Thus it is evident, that he borrowed his knowledge from the Phœnicians, and probably his ſkill in aſtronomy, they being very expert in that ſcience, by reaſon of its uſe in their navigation. Why then might there not be a machine which exhibited the motions of the ſun, made by the Phœnicians, and why might not Homer be acquainted with it? It is probable that Pherecydes took his pattern from this Heliotrope, which being one of the greateſt rarities of antiquity, might give a great reputation to Syros, and conſequently was worthy to be celebrated by Homer, the great preſerver of antiquities. "Fallitur igitur, (ſays Bochart) Euſtathius, cum vult intelligi, quaſi ſita ſit Syrus ad occiduas partes Delî; cum contra Deli ad ortum ſit Syrus, non ad occaſum; & rem ſic ſe habere ex ipſo Homero patet, apud quem Eumæus in Ithacâ, Syriam aſſerit eſſe trans Delum, quo nihil dici potuit falſius, ſi Syrus ſit ad occaſum Deli." If this anſwer appears to any perſon too ſtupid and abſtruſe, the difficulty may be ſolved, by ſuppoſing Eumæus ſpeaking of Delos, as it lay with reſpect to Syrus, before he was carried from it; for inſtance, if Syrus lies on the eaſt of Delos to a man in Ithaca, both Ithaca and Delos will lie on the weſt of Syrus to one of that iſland; I would therefore imagine that Eumæus ſpeaks as a native of Syrus, and not as a ſojourner in Ithaca, and then Delos will lie towards the ſun-ſetting, or πρὸς ἠλίου Τροπὰς: but this laſt I only propoſe as a conjecture, not preſuming to offer it as a deciſion.

v. 442. *Not large, but fruitful; ſtor'd with graſs to keep*
The bellowing oxen, and the bleating ſheep.]

It is probable that Homer was well acquainted with the nature of this iſland, and that it really enjoyed an admirable temperature of

Her ſloping hills the mantling vines adorn,
And her rich valleys wave with golden corn.
No want, no famine the glad natives know,
Nor ſink by ſickneſs to the ſhades below;
But when a length of years unnerves the ſtrong,
Apollo comes, and Cynthia comes along.
They bend the ſilver bow with tender ſkill,
And void of pain, the ſilent arrows kill.
Two equal tribes this fertile land divide,
Where two fair cities riſe with equal pride.
But both in conſtant peace one prince obey,
And Cteſius there, my father, holds the ſway.
Freighted, it ſeems, with toys of ev'ry ſort
A ſhip of Sidon anchor'd in our port;

air; and therefore was exceedingly healthful; the fertility of the ſoil proves the happineſs of the air, which would naturally free the inhabitants from the maladies ariſing from a leſs ſalubrious ſituation. It is for this reaſon they are to be ſlain by Diana and Apollo. All deaths that were ſudden, and without ſickneſs, were aſcribed to thoſe deities. Bochart (p. 410.) tells us, that the name of Syros was given to the iſland by the Phœnicians; Aſira or Sira ſignifying "rich," in their language; or rather it was ſo called from Sura, or Aſura, ſignifying "happy;" either of theſe derivations fully denotes the excellence both of the ſoil and air: and that this name is of Phœnician extract is probable from the words of Homer, who aſſures us that they ſtayed a whole year upon this iſland, and conſequently had opportunity to know the healthfulneſs and fertility of it.

v. 457. *A ſhip of Sidon.*——] Here is full teſtimony, that the Phœnicians were remarkable for arts and navigation over all the old world. They were expulſed from their country by Joſhua, (as Bochart informs us) and then ſettling along the ſea coaſts, they ſpread over all the Mediterranean, and by degrees ſent out colonies into Europe, Aſia, and Afric; that they were in Afric appears from Procopius, where he mentions a pillar with a Phœnician inſcription. Ἡμεῖς ἐσμὲν οἱ φύγοντες ἀπὸ προσώπου Ἰησοῦ τοῦ λῃστοῦ υἱοῦ Ναυή; that is, "We are a "people that fly from Joſhua the ſon of Nun, the robber;" they gave him that title out of reſentment for their diſpoſſeſſion. The character they bear in the ſcriptures agrees with this in Homer. Iſaiah xxiii. 2. "The merchants of Sidon, that paſs over the ſeas," and it likewiſe appears from the ſcriptures, that they excelled in all arts of embroidery, and works of curioſity.

What-time it chanc'd the palace entertain'd,
Skill'd in rich works, a woman of their land:
This nymph, where anchor'd the Phœnician train
To waſh her robes deſcending to the main,
A ſmooth-tongu'd ſailor won her to his mind;
(For love deceives the beſt of woman-kind.)
A ſudden truſt from ſudden liking grew;
She told her name, her race, and all ſhe knew.
I too (ſhe cry'd) from glorious Sidon came,
My father Arybas, of wealthy fame;
But ſnatch'd by pirates from my native place,
The Taphians ſold me to this man's embrace.
Haſte then (the falſe deſigning youth reply'd)
Haſte to thy country; love ſhall be thy guide;
Haſte to thy father's houſe, thy father's breaſt,
For ſtill he lives, and lives with riches bleſt.
"Swear firſt (ſhe cry'd) ye ſailors! to reſtore
"A wretch in ſafety to her native ſhore."
Swift as ſhe aſk'd, the ready ſailors ſwore.

v. 468. *What-time it chanc'd the palace entertain'd,*
Skill'd in rich works, a woman of their land.]

I was ſurpriſed to find that Euſtathius miſtook this Phœnician woman for the mother of Eumæus; ſhe herſelf tells us, that ſhe was only his governeſs.

Παῖδα γὰς ἀνδρὸς ἐῆος ἐνὶ μεγάροις ἀτιτάλλω.

It is not probable that Eumæus would have painted his own mother in the dreſs of an adultereſs, and an abandoned traitreſs: nay, he directly diſtinguiſhes his mother from this Phœnician in the ſequel of the ſtory (where he calls her σεμνὴ μήτης, or his "venerable mother") and when he ſpeaks of the Phœnician, he conſtantly calls her γυνὴ, not μήτης. Nor indeed could he have called her σεμνὴ at all, if ſhe had been a perſon of ſuch a deteſtable character. Spondanus adopts the miſtake of Euſtathius, and endeavours to vindicate her from the manner of her frailty. "Modeſte decepta doris, &c. ut eorum libidini "obſecundaret," "it was a modeſt adultery, ſhe being deceived by "bribes to yield to their ſolicitation." However erroneous this opinion is, yet it ſhews Spondanus to be a kind and complaiſant caſuiſt.

She then proceeds: Now let our compact made
Be not by ſignal nor by word betray'd,
Nor near me any of your crew deſcry'd
By road frequented, or by fountain ſide.
Be ſilence ſtill our guard. The monarch's ſpies
(For watchful age is ready to ſurmiſe)
Are ſtill at hand; and this, reveal'd, muſt be
Death to yourſelves, eternal chains to me.
Your veſſel loaded, and your traffic paſt,
Diſpatch a wary meſſenger with haſte:
Then gold and coſtly treaſures will I bring,
And more, the infant-offspring of the king.
Him, child-like wand'ring forth, I'll lead the away,
(A noble prize!) and to your ſhip convey.
Thus ſpoke the dame, and homeward took the road;
A year they traffic, and their veſſel load.
Their ſtores compleat, and ready now to weigh,
A ſpy was ſent their ſummons to convey:
An artiſt to my father's palace came,
With gold and amber chains, elab'rate frame:
Each female eye the glitt'ring links employ,
They turn, review, and cheapen ev'ry toy.
He took th' occaſion as they ſtood intent,
Gave her the ſign, and to his veſſel went.
She ſtraight purſu'd, and ſeiz'd my willing arm;
I follow'd ſmiling, innocent of harm.

v. 502. *I followed ſmiling, innocent of harm.*] There is a little incredibility in this narration; for if Eumæus was ſuch an infant as he is deſcribed to be at the time when he was betrayed by his Phœnician governeſs, what probability is there that he ſhould be able to retain all theſe particulars ſo circumſtantially? He was not of age capable of making, or remembring ſo many obſervations. The anſwer is, that he afterwards learned them from Laertes, who bought him of the Phœnicians: and no doubt they told him the quality of Eumæus, to enhance the price and make the better bargain. It is alſo natural to imagine, that Eumæus, when he grew up to manhood, would be inquiſitive after his own birth and fortunes, and therefore might probably learn theſe particulars from Laertes. Euſtathius.

Three golden goblets in the porch ſhe found,
(The gueſts not enter'd, but the table crown'd)
Hid in her fraudful boſom, theſe ſhe bore:
Now ſet the ſun, and darken'd all the ſhore.
Arriving then, where tilting on the tides
Prepar'd to lanch the freighted veſſel rides;
Aboard they heave us, mount their decks, and ſweep
With level oar along the glaſſy deep.
Six calmy days and ſix ſmooth nights we ſail,
And conſtant Jove ſupply'd the gentle gale.
The ſeventh, the fraudful wretch, (no cauſe deſcry'd)
Touch'd by Diana's vengeful arrow dy'd.
Down dropt the caitiff-corſe, a worthleſs load,
Down to the deep; there roll'd, the future food
Of fierce ſea-wolves, and monſters of the flood.
An helpleſs infant, I remain'd behind;
Thence borne to Ithaca by wave and wind;
Sold to Laertes, by divine command,
And now adopted to a foreign land.

v. 511. *Six calmy days*, &c.] It is evident from this paſſage, that it is above ſix days ſail from Ithaca to Syros, though carried with favourable winds. Dacier.

v. 514. —— *Diana's vengeful arrow*——] I would juſt obſerve the poetical juſtice of Homer, in the puniſhment of this Phœnician. Misfortune generally purſues wickedneſs, and though we eſcape the vengeance of man, yet heaven frequently overtakes us when we think we are in ſecurity, and death calls us from our impious acquiſitions.

v. 521. *And now adopted to a foreign land.*] Homer has here given us an hiſtory of the life of Eumæus; the epiſode contains near an hundred lines, and may ſeem entirely foreign to the action of the Odyſſey. I will not affirm that it is in every reſpect to be juſtified. The main ſtory is at hand; but we are to conſider that this relation takes up but one ſmall part of one leiſure evening, and that the action cannot proceed till the return of Telemachus. It is of uſe to ſet off the character of Eumæus, and ſhew him to be a perſon of quality, worthy to be an agent in an epic poem, where every character ought to be remote from meanneſs: ſo the ſtory has a diſtant relation to the Odyſſey, and perhaps is not to be looked upon merely as an excreſcence from the main building, but a ſmall projection to adorn it.

To him the king. Reciting thus thy cares,
My ſecret ſoul in all thy ſorrows ſhares:
But one choice bleſſing (ſuch is Jove's high will)
Has ſweeten'd all thy bitter draught of ill:
Torn from thy country to no hapleſs end,
The gods have, in a maſter, giv'n a friend.
Whatever frugal nature needs is thine,
(For ſhe needs little) daily bread and wine.
While I, ſo many wand'rings paſt and woes,
Live but on what thy poverty beſtows.
So paſt in pleaſing dialogue away
The night; then down to ſhort repoſe they lay;
Till radiant roſe the meſſenger of day.
While in the port of Ithaca, the band
Of young Telemachus approach'd the land;
Their ſails they loos'd, they laſh'd the maſt aſide,
And caſt their anchors, and the cables ty'd:
Then on the breezy ſhore deſcending join
In grateful banquet o'er the roſy wine.
When thus the prince: Now each his courſe purſue;
I to the fields, and to the city you.
Long abſent hence, I dedicate this day
My ſwains to viſit, and the works ſurvey.
Expect me with the morn, to pay the ſkies
Our debt of ſafe return, in feaſt and ſacrifice.
Then Theoclymenus. But who ſhall lend,
Meantime, protection to thy ſtranger-friend?

v 534. *'Till radiant roſe the meſſenger of day.*] This is the morning of the thirty-eighth day ſince the beginning of the Odyſſey. It is obſervable that Telemachus takes more time in his return from Pylos, than in ſailing thither from his own country; for in the latter end of the ſecond book he ſets ſail after ſun ſetting, and reached Pyle in the morning: here he embarks in the afternoon, and yet arrives not at Ithaca till after break of day. The reaſon of it is not to be aſcribed to a leſs proſperous wind, but to the greater compaſs he was obliged to fetch, to eſcape the ambuſh of the ſuitors. In the former voyage he ſteered a direct courſe; in this he ſails round about to the north of Ithaca, and therefore waſtes more time in his voyage to it.

Straight to the queen and palace ſhall I fly,
Or yet more diſtant, to ſome lord apply?
The prince return'd. Renown'd in days of yore
Has ſtood our father's hoſpitable door;
No other roof a ſtranger ſhou'd receive,
Nor other hands than ours the welcome give.
But in my abſence riot fills the place,
Nor bears the modeſt queen a ſtranger's face,
From noiſeful revel far remote ſhe flies,
But rarely ſeen, or ſeen with weeping eyes.
No —— let Eurymachus receive my gueſt,
Of nature courteous, and by far the beſt;
He wooes the queen with more reſpectful flame,
And emulates her former huſband's fame:
With what ſucceſs, 'tis Jove's alone to know,
And the hop'd nuptials turn to joy or woe.
Thus ſpeaking, on the right up-ſoar'd in air
The hawk, Apollo's ſwift-wing'd meſſenger;

v. 561. *He wooes the queen with more reſpectful flame,*
And emulates her former huſband's fame.]

The words in the original are ὀδυσσῆος γέρας ἔξειν, which may either be rendered, "to obtain the honour of marrying Penelope," agreeably to the former part of the verſe; or it means that Eurymachus has the faireſt hopes to marry Penelope, and "obtain the throne" or γέρας of Ulyſſes. Hobbes tranſlates the verſe almoſt obſcenely in the former ſenſe:

——— He beſt loves my mother;
And what my father did, would do the ſame.

The former in my judgment is the better conſtruction, eſpecially becauſe it avoids a tautology, and gives a new image in the ſecond part of the verſe, very different from the ſenſe expreſſed in the former part of it. But of all the meanings it is capable of I ſhould prefer this; "That he courts her upon the moſt honourable principles, "and ſeems deſirous to have the honour of Ulyſſes, by imitating his "worth:" and this is agreeable to the character of Eurymachus, which diſtinguiſhes him from all the other ſuitors.

v. 566. *The hawk, Apollo's ſwift-wing'd meſſenger.*] The augury is thus to be interpreted; Ulyſſes is the hawk, the ſuitors the pigeon; the hawk denotes the valour of Ulyſſes, being a bird of prey;

His deathful pounces tore a trembling dove;
The clotted feathers, ſcatter'd from above,
Between the hero and the veſſel pour
Thick plumage, mingled with a ſanguine ſhow'r.
Th' obſerving augur took the prince aſide,
Seiz'd by the hand, and thus prophetic cry'd.
Yon' bird that dexter cuts th' aerial road,
Roſe ominous, nor flies without a god:
No race but thine ſhall Ithaca obey,
To thine, for ages, heav'n decrees the ſway.
Succeed the omen, gods! (the youth rejoin'd)
Soon ſhall my bounties ſpeak a grateful mind,
And ſoon each envy'd happineſs attend
The man, who calls Telemachus his friend.
Then to Peiræus —— Thou whom time has prov'd
A faithful ſervant, by the prince belov'd!

the pigeon repreſents the cowardice of the ſuitors, that bird being remarkable for her timorous nature. The hawk flies on the right, to denote ſucceſs to Ulyſſes.

Homer calls this bird the meſſenger of Apollo; not that this augury was ſent by that deity, (though that be no forced interpretation) but the expreſſion implies, that the hawk was ſacred to Apollo; as the peacock was to Juno, the owl to Pallas, and the eagle to Jupiter. Thus Ælian, anim. lib. x. c. 14. Αἰγύπτιοι τὸν ἱέρακα τῷ Ἀπόλλωνι τιμᾶν ἐοικάσι, &c. and he gives the reaſon of it, for the hawk is the only bird that is capable to bear the luſtre of the ſun without inconvenience and difficulty; the ſame is ſaid of the eagle, but this hawk is reckoned to be of the aquiline kind. It was death among the Ægyptians to kill this bird, becauſe it was dedicated to Apollo.

There is another reaſon why any bird that was taken notice of by way of augury, may be ſaid to be the meſſenger of Apollo, that deity preſiding over divination.

v. 571. *Th' obſerving augur took the prince aſide.*] The reaſon why Theoclymenus withdraws Telemachus, while he interprets the augury, is not apparent at the firſt view, but he does it out of an apprehenſion leſt he ſhould be overheard by ſome of the company, who might diſcloſe the ſecret to the ſuitors, and ſuch a diſcovery might prove fatal to his own perſon, or to the fortunes of Telemachus. Euſtathius.

v. 581. *Then to Peiræus —— Thou whom time has prov'd,* &c.] We find that Telemachus intended to deliver Theoclymenus to the care

'Till we returning ſhall our gueſt demand,
Accept this charge with honour, at our hand.
To this Peiræus; Joyful I obey,
Well pleas'd the hoſpitable rites to pay.
The preſence of thy gueſt ſhall beſt reward
(If long thy ſtay) the abſence of my lord.
With that, their anchors he commands to weigh,
Mount the tall bark and lanch into the ſea.
All with obedient haſte forſake the ſhores,
And plac'd in order, ſpread their equal oars.
Then from the deck the prince his ſandals takes;
Pois'd in his hand the pointed jav'lin ſhakes.
They part; while leſs'ning from the hero's view,
Swift to the town the well-row'd galley flew:
The hero trod the margin of the main,
And reach'd the manſion of his faithful ſwain.

of Eurymachus: what then is the reaſon why he thus ſuddenly alters that reſolution, and intruſts him to Peiræus? This is occaſioned by the diſcovery of the ſkill of Theoclymenus in augury: he fears leſt the ſuitors ſhould extort ſome prediction from him that might be detrimental to his affairs, or ſhould he refuſe it, to the perſon of Theoclymenus. Euſtathius.

This book comprehends ſomewhat more than the ſpace of two days and one night; for the viſion appears to Telemachus a little before the dawn, in the night preceding the thirty-ſixth day, and he lands in Ithaca, on the thirty-eighth in the morning.

THE ODYSSEY.

BOOK XVI.

THE ARGUMENT.

The diſcovery of Ulyſſes to Telemachus.

Telemachus arriving at the lodge of Eumæus, ſends him to carry Penelope the news of his return. Minerva appearing to Ulyſſes, commands him to diſcover himſelf to his ſon. The princes, who had lain in ambuſh to intercept Telemachus in his way, their project being defeated, return to Ithaca.

SOON as the morning bluſh'd along the plains,
Ulyſſes, and the monarch of the ſwains,
Awake the ſleeping fires, their meal prepare,
And forth to paſture ſend the briſtly care.

v. 1. *Soon as the morning bluſh'd along the plains*, &c.] This book opens with the greateſt ſimplicity imaginable. Dionyſius Halicarnaſſus quotes the ſixteen firſt lines to this purpoſe: the poet, ſays that author, deſcribes a low and vulgar action, yet gives it an inexpreſſible ſweetneſs; the ear is pleaſed with the harmony of the poetry, and yet there is nothing noble in the ſentiments. Whence, continues he, does this ariſe? from the choice of the words, or from the placing of them? No one will affirm that it conſiſts in the choice of the words, for the diction is entirely low and vulgar, ſo vulgar that a common artificer or peaſant, who never ſtudied elocution, would uſe it in converſation; turn the verſes into proſe, and this will appear. There are no tranſpoſitions, no figures, no variety of a dialect, nor any new and ſtudied expreſſions. Where then is the beauty of the poetry? It muſt be entirely aſcribed to the harmonious juncture and poſition of the words; and he concludes that the collocation of words has a greater efficacy both in proſe and poetry, than the choice. And indeed a judicious diſpoſition of them (like what is

The prince's near approach the dogs deſcry,
And fawning round his feet confeſs their joy.

feigned of Minerva in this book) makes a mean, deformed, and vulgar period, riſe, like Ulyſſes from beggary, into pomp and dignity. This may be exemplified from the rules of mechanic arts: an architect, when he gathers his materials for a building, has theſe three things chiefly in view: firſt, with what piece of ſtone, wood, &c. a correſpondent piece will beſt agree: next he conſiders their ſeveral formations, and how it will beſt ſtand in the ſtructure; and laſtly, if any part of the materials ſuits not with the allotted place, he rejects it or new ſhapes it, till it agrees with the whole work: the ſame care is to be taken by a good writer: he is firſt to conſider what noun or verb is to be joined to other nouns or verbs ſo fitly as not poſſibly to be placed more conveniently; for a promiſcuous connecting of words indiſcriminately ſpoils both proſe and poetry: next he conſiders the frame or turn of the verb or noun, and how it will ſtand in the place he allots it; and if it ſuits not exactly, he changes it, ſometimes by varying the numbers, ſometimes the caſes, and at other times the genders: and laſtly, if a word prove ſo ſtubborn as not to bend to the level of the period, he intirely rejects it, and introduces another that preſerves a due conformity; or at leaſt, if an inharmonious word be neceſſary, he places it ſo judiciouſly between more agreeable and tuneful words, that their harmony ſteals away our imagination from obſerving the roughneſs of the others: like wiſe generals, who in ordering the ranks of their ſoldiers, ſtrengthen the weaker files by ſuſtaining them with the ſtronger; and by this method render the whole invincible. See likewiſe cap. xxxii. of Longinus, of the diſpoſition of words.

v. 3. ——— ——— ——— *their meal prepare.*] The word in the original is ἄριστον, which here denotes very evidently the morning repaſt: it is uſed but in one other place in all Homer in this ſenſe, Iliad, lib. xxiv. v. 124.

Ἐσσυμένως ἐπένυτο νὺ ἐντύνυτο ἄριστον.

But we are not therefore to imagine that this was an unuſual meal; Homer in other places expreſſes it by δεῖπνον, as is obſerved by Athenæus, lib. 1.

Οἳ δ' ἄρα δεῖπνον ἔλοντ' ἀπὸ δ' αὐτῆ θωρήσσοντο

"At the dawn of the day they took repaſt and armed themſelves for "battle." The Greeks had three cuſtomary meals, which are diſtinctly mentioned by Palamedes in Æſchylus,

Ἄριστα, δεῖπνα, δόρπαθ' αἱρεῖσθαι τρίτα.

Their gentle blandiſhment the king ſurvey'd,
Heard his reſounding ſtep, and inſtant ſaid:
Some well-known friend (Eumæus) bends this way;
His ſteps I hear; the dogs familiar play.
While yet he ſpoke, the prince advancing drew
Nigh to the lodge, and now appear'd in view.
Tranſported from his ſeat Eumæus ſprung,
Dropp'd the full bowl, and round his boſom hung;

Homer, adds Athenæus, mentions a fourth repaſt, lib. xvii. of the Odyſſey:

——————σὺ δ' ἔρχεο δειελιήσας.

This the Romans called "commeſſationem," we a collation, a repaſt taken, as the ſame author explains it, between dinner and ſupper; the word is derived from ἀπὸ τῆς δείλης ὀψίας, or "the evening "twilight." But Athenæus refutes himſelf, lib. v. p. 193. I have already (ſays he) obſerved that the antients eat thrice a day; and it is ridiculous to imagine that they eat four times from theſe words of Homer,

——————σὺ δ' ἔρχεο δειελιήσας.

For that expreſſion meant only that Eumæus ſhould return in the evening, δειλινὸν διαλιπὼν χρόνον. But this is not the full import of the word δειελιήσας, for it undoubtedly means, to take the evening repaſt or ſupper, as is evident from the concluſion of the ſeventeenth book of the Odyſſey: "Return, ſays Telemachus to Eumæus, but firſt "take refreſhment;" and Eumæus accordingly eats, and the poet immediately adds, "becauſe the evening was come," or ἐπήλυθε δείελον ἦμαρ. However, in no ſenſe can this word be brought to prove that the Greeks eat four times in the day: but if any perſon will imagine, that it ſignifies in that place an immediate meal, all that can be gathered from it is, that Telemachus out of kindneſs to Eumæus commands him to eat before the uſual hour of repaſt, before he leaves his palace: but Heſychius rightly interprets it by τὸ δειλινὸν λάθων ἔμβρωμα, that is, "eating his ſupper;" for as δεῖπνον and ἄριστον ſignify the dinner, ſo δόρπον and δειλινὸν denote the time of ſupper promiſcuouſly.

I will add no more, but refer the reader for a full explication of δεῖπνον, ἄριστον and δειλινὸν, to lib. viii. Queſt. 6. of Plutarch's Sympoſiacs.

v. 14. *Dropp'd the full bowl*——————] In the original it is, Eumæus dropped the bowl as he tempered it with water. It was cuſtomary not to drink wine unmixed with water among the antients; there was no certain proportion obſerved in the mixture, ſome to one veſſel of wine poured in two of water, others to two

Kiſſing his cheek, his hand, while from his eye
The tears rain'd copious in a ſhow'r of joy.
As ſome fond ſire who ten long winters grieves,
From foreign climes an only ſon receives,
(Child of his age) with ſtrong paternal joy
Forward he ſprings, and claſps the fav'rite boy:
So round the youth his arms Eumæus ſpread,
As if the grave had giv'n him from the dead.
And is it thou? my ever-dear delight!
O art thou come to bleſs my longing ſight!
Never, I never hop'd to view this day,
When o'er the waves you plough'd the deſp'rate way.
Enter, my child! beyond my hopes reſtor'd,
O give theſe eyes to feaſt upon their lord.
Enter, oh ſeldom ſeen! for lawleſs pow'rs
Too much detain thee from theſe ſilvan bow'rs.
The prince reply'd; Eumæus, I obey;
To ſeek thee, friend, I hither took my way.

of wine five of water. Homer tells us that the wine of Maron was ſo ſtrong as to require twenty meaſures of water to one of wine; but perhaps this is ſpoken hyperbolically, to ſhew the uncommon ſtrength of it. The Lacedæmonians uſed to boil their wine till the fifth part was conſumed, and then keeping it four years, drank it: but ſometimes the Grecians drank it without water (but this they called reproachfully ἐπισκυθίσαι, or to act like a Scythian, from whom they borrowed the cuſtom.) It was uſual even for children to drink wine thus tempered amongſt the Grecians: thus in this book Eurymachus,

——————ἐπέσχέ δὲ οἶνον ἐρυθρόν.

And Phœnix in the ninth of the Iliad, ſpeaking of Achilles;

——————οἶνον ἐπίσχων
Πολλάκι μοι κατέδευσας.

At Athens there was an altar erected to Bacchus ὄρθιος, becauſe from thus tempering the wine, men returned "upright" or ſober from entertainments; and a law was enacted by Amphitryon, and afterwards revived by Solon, that no unmixed wine ſhould be drank at any entertainment.

But ſay, if in the court the queen reſide
Severely chaſte, or if commenc'd a bride?
Thus he: and thus the monarch of the ſwains;
Severely chaſte Penelope remains,
But loſt to ev'ry joy, ſhe waſtes the day
In tedious cares, and weeps the night away.
He ended, and (receiving as they paſs
The jav'lin, pointed with a ſtar of braſs)
They reach'd the dome; the dome with marble ſhin'd.
His ſeat Ulyſſes to the prince reſign'd.

v. 33. ——— *if in the court the queen reſide*
Severely chaſte, or if commenc'd a bride?]

Homer here makes uſe of a proverbial expreſſion. It may be thus literally tranſlated,

Or ſay if obſtinate no more to wed,
She dooms to ſpiders nets th' imperial bed:

Telemachus means by this queſtion, if Penelope be determined no more to marry; for the marriage-bed was eſteemed ſo ſacred, that upon the deceaſe or abſence of the huſband, it remained unuſed.

Euſtathius quotes the ſame expreſſion from other authors of antiquity; thus Heſiod,

Ἐκ δ' ἀϛγέων ἐλασείας ἀράχνια.

"You ſhall clear the veſſels from ſpiders webs;" meaning that you "ſhall have ſo full employment for your veſſels, that the ſpiders ſhall "no more ſpread their looms there." And another poet praying for peace, wiſhes ſpiders may weave their nets upon the ſoldiers arms; ἕτερος ποιήτης ἐθέλων εἰρήνην εὔξασθαι, ἀράχνας ἐπεύχεται νήμαϛα ὑφάναι τοῖς ὅπλοις. Thus we find among the Greeks it was an expreſſion of dignity, and applied to great and ſerious occaſions; I am not certain that it is ſo uſed by the Romans. Catullus uſes it jocoſely, ſpeaking of his empty purſe.

" ——— nam tui Catulli
" Plenus ſacculus eſt aranearum."

Plautus does the ſame in his Aulularia:

" ——— anne quis ædes auferat?
" Nam hic apud nos nihil eſt aliud quæſti furibus,
" Ita inaniis ſunt oppletæ, atque araneis."

I am doubtful if it be not too mean an image for Engliſh poetry.

Not ſo — (exclaims the prince with decent grace]
For me, this houſe ſhall find an humbler place:
T' uſurp the honours due to ſilver hairs
And rev'rend ſtrangers, modeſt youth forbears.
Inſtant the ſwain the ſpoils of beaſts ſupplies,
And bids the rural throne with oſiers riſe.
There ſat the prince: the feaſt Eumæus ſpread,
And heap'd the ſhining caniſters with bread.
Thick o'er the board the plenteous viands lay,
The frugal remnants of the former day.
Then in a bowl he tempers gen'rous wines,
Around whoſe verge a mimic ivy twines.
And now the rage of thirſt and hunger fled,
Thus young Ulyſſes to Eumæus ſaid.
Whence, father, from what ſhore this ſtranger, ſay?
What veſſel bore him o'er the wat'ry way?

v. 43. *Not ſo —— (exclaims the prince) ———*] Nothing can more ſtrongly repreſent the reſpect which antiquity paid to ſtrangers, than this conduct of Telemachus: Ulyſſes is in rags, in the diſguiſe of a beggar, and yet a prince refuſes to take his ſeat. I doubt not but every good man will be pleaſed with ſuch inſtances of benevolence and humanity to his fellow-creatures; one well-natured action is preferable to a thouſand great ones, and Telemachus appears with more advantage upon this heap of hides and oſiers, than a tyrant upon his throne.

v. 52. *The frugal remnants of the former day.*] This entertainment is neither to be aſcribed to parſimony nor poverty, but to the cuſtom and hoſpitality of former ages. It was a common expreſſion among the Greeks at table, "leave ſomething for the Medes;" intimating that ſomething ought to be left for a gueſt that might come accidentally. Plutarch in his ſeventh book of the Sympoſ. queſtion 3. commends this conduct. Eumæus (ſays that author) a wiſe ſcholar of a wiſe maſter, is no way diſcompoſed, when Telemachus pays him a viſit, he immediately ſets before him

The frugal remnants of the former day.

Beſides, the table was accounted ſacred to the gods, and nothing that was ſacred was permitted to be empty; this was another reaſon why the antients always reſerved part of their proviſions, not ſolely out of hoſpitality to men, but piety to the gods.

To human ſtep our land impervious lies,
And round the coaſt circumfluent oceans riſe.
The ſwain returns. A tale of ſorrows hear;
In ſpacious Crete he drew his natal air,
Long doom'd to wander o'er the land and main,
For heav'n has wove his thread of life with pain.
Half-breathleſs 'ſcaping from the land he flew
From Theſprot mariners, a murd'rous crew.
To thee my ſon the ſuppliant I reſign,
I gave him my protection, grant him thine.
Hard taſk, he cries, thy virtue gives thy friend,
Willing to aid, unable to defend.

v. 70. *Willing to aid,*—— ——] It has been obſerved that Homer intended to give us the picture of a complete hero in his two poems, drawn from the characters of Achilles and Ulyſſes: Achilles has conſummate valour, but wants the wiſdom of Ulyſſes: Ulyſſes has courage, but courage inclining to caution and ſtratagem, as much as that of Achilles to raſhneſs. Virgil endeavoured to form a complete hero in Æneas, by joining in his perſon the forward courage of Achilles, with the wiſdom of Ulyſſes, and by this conduct gives us a perfect character. The ſame obſervation holds good with reſpect to the ſubordinate characters introduced into the two poems of the Iliad and Odyſſey; and makes an eſſential difference between them: thus the Iliad exhibiting an example of heroic valour, almoſt all the characters are violent and heroic. Diomed, Ajax, Hector, &c. are all chiefly remarkable for courage: but the Odyſſey being intended to repreſent the patience and wiſdom of an hero, almoſt all the characters are diſtinguiſhed by benevolence and humanity. Telemachus and Eumæus, Alcinous, Neſtor and Menelaus, are every where repreſented in the mild light of wiſdom and hoſpitality. This makes a continued difference of ſtyle in the poetry of the two poems, and the characters of the agents in the Odyſſey neceſſarily exhibit lectures of piety and morality. The reader ſhould keep this in his view. In reading Homer, the Odyſſey is to be looked upon as a ſequel of the Iliad, and then he will find in the two poems the perfection of human nature, conſummate courage joined with conſummate piety. He muſt be an unobſerving reader, who has not taken notice of that "vein of humanity" that runs through the whole Odyſſey; and a bad man, that has not been pleaſed with it. In my opinion, Eumæus tending his herds is more amiable than Achilles in all his deſtructive glory. There is ſcarce a ſpeech made in the Odyſſey by Eumæus, Telemachus or Ulyſſes, but what tends to the improvement of mankind: it was this that endeared the Odyſſey to the antients, and Homer's ſentences of morality were in every mouth, and introduced in

Can ſtrangers ſafely in the court reſide,
Midſt the ſwell'd inſolence of luſt and pride?
Ev'n I unſafe: the queen in doubt to wed,
Or pay due honours to the nuptial bed?
Perhaps ſhe weds regardleſs of her fame,
Deaf to the mighty Ulyſſæan name.
However, ſtranger! from our grace receive
Such honours as befit a prince to give;
Sandals, a ſword, and robes, reſpect to prove,
And ſafe to ſail with ornaments of love.
'Till then, thy gueſt amid the rural train
Far from the court, from danger far, detain.
'Tis mine with food the hungry to ſupply,
And cloath the naked from th' inclement ſky.
Here dwell in ſafety from the ſuitors wrongs,
And the rude inſults of ungovern'd tongues.
For ſhould'ſt thou ſuffer, pow'rleſs to relieve
I muſt behold it, and can only grieve.
The brave encompaſs'd by an hoſtile train,
O'erpower'd by numbers, is but brave in vain.
To whom, while anger in his boſom glows,
With warmth replies the man of mighty woes.

all converſations, for the better conduct of human life. This verſe was thus applied by ſome of the antients; a perſon being aſked what was the duty of an orator, or pleader, anſwered from Homer,

Ἄνδρ' ἀπαμύνασθαι ὅτε τις πρότερος χαλεπήνῃ.

In ſhort, I will not deny but that the Iliad is by far the nobler poem, with reſpect to the poetry; it is fit to be read by kings and heroes; but the Odyſſey is of uſe to all mankind, as it teaches us to be good men rather than great, and to prefer morality to glory.

v. 92. *With warmth replies the man of mighty woes.*] There is not a more ſpirited ſpeech in all the Odyſſey than this of Ulyſſes; his reſentment ariſes from the laſt words of Telemachus, obſerves Euſtathius:

The brave encompaſs'd by an hoſtile train,
O'erpower'd by numbers, is but brave in vain.

Since audience mild is deign'd, permit my tongue
At once to pity and reſent thy wrong.
My heart weeps blood, to ſee a ſoul ſo brave
Live to baſe inſolence of pow'r a ſlave.
But tell me, doſt thou, prince, doſt thou behold,
And hear, their midnight revels uncontroll'd?
Say, do thy ſubjects in bold faction riſe,
Or prieſts in fabled oracles adviſe?
Or are thy brothers, who ſhould aid thy pow'r,
Turn'd mean deſerters in the needful hour?
O that I were from great Ulyſſes ſprung,
Or that theſe wither'd nerves like thine were ſtrung;
Or, heav'ns! might he return! (and ſoon appear
He ſhall, I truſt; a hero ſcorns deſpair)

He is preparing his ſon for the deſtruction of the ſuitors, and animating him againſt deſpair by reaſon of their numbers. This he brings about, by repreſenting that a brave man in a good cauſe prefers death to diſhonour. By the ſame method Homer exalts the character of Ulyſſes: Telemachus thinks it impoſſible to reſiſt the ſuitors, Ulyſſes not only reſiſts them, but almoſt without aſſiſtance works their deſtruction. There is a fine contraſt between the tried courage of Ulyſſes, and the inexperience of Telemachus.

v. 105. ——— ——— ——— *(and ſoon appear*
He ſhall, I truſt; a hero ſcorns deſpair).]

Some antient critics, as Euſtathius informs us, rejected this verſe, and thus read the paſſage:

Ἦ παῖς ἐξ Ὀδυσῆος ἀμύμονος, ἠὲ καὶ αὐτὸς;
Αὐτίκ' ἔπειτ' ἀπ' ἐμεῖο πάσῃ τάμοι ἀλλοτρίος φώς.

Then the ſenſe will be, "Oh that I were the ſon of Ulyſſes, or "Ulyſſes himſelf, &c."

For, add they, if this verſe be admitted, it breaks the tranſport of Ulyſſes's reſentment, and cools the warmth of the expreſſion; Euſtathius confeſſes that he was once of the ſame opinion, but afterwards ſeems dubious; for continues he, Ulyſſes by ſaying, "Oh "that I were the ſon of Ulyſſes, or Ulyſſes himſelf," gave room to ſuſpect that he was himſelf Ulyſſes; and therefore to efface this impreſſion, he adds with great addreſs,

——— ——— ——— (and ſoon appear
He ſhall, I truſt; a hero ſcorns deſpair)

Might he return, I yield my life a prey
To my worſt foe, if that avenging day
Be not their laſt: but ſhould I loſe my life
Oppreſs'd by numbers in the glorious ſtrife,
I chuſe the nobler part, and yield my breath,
Rather than bear diſhonour, worſe than death;
Than ſee the hand of violence invade
The rev'rend ſtranger, and the ſpotleſs maid;
Than ſee the wealth of kings conſum'd in waſte,
The drunkards revel, and the gluttons feaſt.
Thus he, with anger flaſhing from his eye;
Sincere the youthful hero made reply.
Nor leagu'd in factious arms my ſubjects riſe,
Nor prieſts in fabled oracles adviſe;
Nor are my brothers who ſhould aid my pow'r
Turn'd mean deſerters in the needful hour.
Ah me! I boaſt no brother; heav'n's dread king
Gives from our ſtock an only branch to ſpring:
Alone Laertes reign'd Arceſius' heir,
Alone Ulyſſes drew the vital air,
And I alone the bed connubial grac'd,
An unbleſt offſpring of a ſire unbleſt!

and by this method removes all jealouſy that might ariſe from his former expreſſion. Dacier miſrepreſents Euſtathius; ſhe ſays, "Il "avoit donné lieu à quelque ſubçon qu'il ne fuſt veritablement "Ulyſſe;" whereas he directly ſays, μὴ ὑποπλευθῇ ὅτι Ὀδύσσευς ἔσιν ὁ λαλῶν, that is, "he uſes this expreſſion, that it may not be ſuſ-"pected that he is Ulyſſes who ſpeaks;" in reality he inſerts theſe words ſolely to avoid diſcovery, not judging it yet reaſonable to reveal himſelf to Telemachus, much leſs to Eumæus.

v. 108. *To my worſt foe*———] The words in Greek are ἀλλότριος φὼς, or, "may I fall by the hand of a ſtranger:" that is, by the worſt of enemies, foreigners being uſually the moſt barbarous enemies. This circumſtance therefore aggravates the calamity. Euſtathius.

v. 127. *And I alone the bed connubial grac'd,*] Homer mentions but one ſon of Ulyſſes; other authors name another, Archeſilaus; and Sophocles, Euryalus ſlain by Telemachus; but perhaps theſe deſcended not from Penelope. Euſtathius.

Each neighb'ring realm, conducive to our woe,
Sends forth her peers, and ev'ry peer a foe:
The court proud Samos and Dulichium fills,
And lofty Zacynth crown'd with ſhady hills.
Ev'n Ithaca and all her lords invade
Th' imperial ſcepter, and the regal bed:
The queen averſe to love, yet aw'd by pow'r,
Seems half to yield, yet flies the bridal hour:
Meantime their licence uncontroll'd, I bear;
Ev'n now they envy me the vital air:
But heav'n will ſure revenge, and gods there are.
But go, Eumæus! to the queen impart
Our ſafe return, and eaſe a mother's heart.
Yet ſecret go; for num'rous are my foes,
And here at leaſt I may in peace repoſe.
To whom the ſwain, I hear, and I obey:
But old Laertes weeps his life away,
And deems thee loſt: ſhall I my ſpeed employ
To bleſs his age, a meſſenger of joy?
The mournful hour that tore his ſon away
Sent the ſad ſire in ſolitude to ſtray;

v. 140. *But go, Eumæus! to the queen impart.*] There is nothing more wonderful in Homer, than the diſtribution of his incidents; and how fully muſt he be poſſeſſed of his whole ſubject, and take it in all at one view, to bring about the ſeveral parts of it naturally? Minerva in the beginning of the fifteenth book commanded Telemachus to diſpatch Eumæus to Penelope, to inform her of his return. Here this command is executed: but is this all the uſe the poet makes of that errand? It is evident it is not: this command furniſhes him with a natural occaſion for the removal of Eumæus while Ulyſſes diſcovers himſelf to Telemachus. But why might not the diſcovery have been made before Eumæus? It was ſuitable to the cautious character of Ulyſſes not to truſt the knowledge of his perſon to too many people: beſides, if he had here revealed himſelf to Eumæus, there would not have been room for the diſcovery which is made in the future parts of the Odyſſey, and conſequently the reader had been robbed of the pleaſure of it: and it muſt be allowed, that the ſeveral concealments and diſcoveries of Ulyſſes through the Odyſſey add no ſmall pleaſure and beauty to it.

Yet buſied with his ſlaves, to eaſe his woe,
He dreſt the vine, and bade the garden blow,
Nor food nor wine refus'd: but ſince the day
That you to Pylos plough'd the wat'ry way,
Nor wine nor food he taſtes; but ſunk in woes,
Wild ſprings the vine, no more the garden blows:
Shut from the walks of men, to pleaſure loſt,
Penſive and pale he wanders, half a ghoſt.
Wretched old man! (with tears the prince returns)
Yet ceaſe to go — what man ſo bleſt but mourns?
Were ev'ry wiſh indulg'd by fav'ring ſkies,
This hour ſhou'd give Ulyſſes to my eyes.
But to the queen with ſpeed diſpatchful bear
Our ſafe return, and back with ſpeed repair:

v. 159. *Yet ceaſe to go — what man ſo bleſt but mourns?*] Euſtathius reads the words differently, either ἀχνύμενον πὲρ, or ἀχνύμενοι πὲρ. If we use the former reading, it will be underſtood according to the recited tranſlation; if the latter, it muſt then be referred to Telemachus, and imply, "let us ceaſe to inform Laertes, though we grieve for him." I ſuppoſe ſome critics were ſhocked at the words in the former ſenſe, and thought it cruel in Telemachus not to relieve the ſorrows of Laertes, which were occaſioned chiefly through fondneſs to his perſon: Dacier is fully of this opinion: Euſtathius prefers neither of the lections; I doubt not but Homer wrote ἀχνύμενοι πὲρ; this agrees with the whole context.

> Wretched old man! (with tears the prince returns)
> Yet ceaſe to go — what man ſo bleſt but mourns?
> Were ev'ry wiſh indulg'd by fav'ring ſkies,
> This hour ſhou'd give Ulyſſes to my eyes.

And as for the cruelty of Telemachus, in forbidding Eumæus to go to Laertes, there is no room for this objection: he guards againſt it, by requeſting Penelope to give him immediate information; which might be done almoſt as ſoon by a meſſenger from her, as by Eumæus. Beſides, ſuch a meſſenger to Laertes would be entirely foreign to the poem; for his knowledge of the return of Telemachus could contribute nothing to the deſign of the Odyſſey: whereas the information given to Penelope has this effect; it puts the ſuitors upon new meaſures, and inſtructs her how to regulate her own conduct with regard to them; and therefore the poet judiciouſly dwells upon this, and paſſes over the other.

And let ſome handmaid of her train reſort
To good Laertes in his rural court.
While yet he ſpoke, impatient of delay
He brac'd his ſandals on, and ſtrode away:
Then from the heav'ns the martial goddeſs flies
Thro' the wide fields of air, and cleaves the ſkies;
In form, a virgin in ſoft beauty's bloom,
Skill'd in th' illuſtrious labours of the loom.
Alone to Ithacus ſhe ſtood diſplay'd,
But unapparent as a viewleſs ſhade
Eſcap'd Telemachus: (the pow'rs above
Seen or unſeen, o'er earth at pleaſure move)

v. 170. *In form, a virgin*——.] Some of the antient philoſophers thought the poets guilty of impiety, in repreſenting the gods aſſuming human appearances; Plato in particular (lib. ii. de Repub.) ſpeaks with great ſeverity. "If a god (ſays that author) changes his "own ſhape, muſt he aſſume a more or leſs perfect form? Undoubtedly a ſhape leſs perfect; for a deity, as a deity, can want "no perfection; therefore all change muſt be for the worſe: now "it is abſurd to imagine that a deity can be willing to aſſume imperfection, for this would be a degradation unworthy of a divine "power, and conſequently it is abſurd to imagine that a deity can be "willing to change the form of a deity; it therefore follows, that "the gods enjoying a perfection of nature, muſt eternally and unchangeably appear in it. Let no poet therefore (meaning Homer) "perſuade you that the gods aſſume the form of ſtrangers, and are "viſible in ſuch appearances." It muſt be confeſſed, that if Plato had thus ſpoken only to refute the abſurd opinions of antiquity, which imagined the gods to aſſume unworthy ſhapes of bulls, dragons, ſwans, &c. only to perform ſome rape, or action unbecoming a deity, reaſon would have been on his ſide: but the argument proves too much; it ſuppoſes that a deity muſt loſe his perfections by any appearance but of a deity; which is an error: if a god acts ſuitably to the character of a god, where is the degradation? Ariſtotle was of this judgment, in oppoſition to his maſter Plato; and thought it no diminution to a god to appear in the ſhape of man, the glory of the creation: in reality, it is a great honour to Homer, that his opinions agree with the verity of the Scriptures, rather than the conjectures of philoſophers; nay, it is not impoſſible but theſe relations might be borrowed from the ſacred hiſtory: it being manifeſt that Homer had been in Ægypt, the native country of Moſes, in whoſe writings there are frequent inſtances of this nature.

The dogs intelligent confeſs'd the tread
Of pow'r divine, and howling, trembling fled.
The goddeſs, beck'ning, waves her deathleſs hands;
Dauntleſs the king before the goddeſs ſtands.
Then why (ſhe ſaid) O favour'd of the ſkies!
Why to thy god-like ſon this long diſguiſe?
Stand forth reveal'd: with him thy cares employ
Againſt thy foes; be valiant, and deſtroy!
Lo I deſcend in that avenging hour,
To combat by thy ſide, thy guardian pow'r.
She ſaid, and o'er him waves her wand of gold;
Imperial robes his manly limbs infold:

v. 176. *The dogs intelligent confeſs'd the tread*
Of pow'r divine ——]

This may ſeem a circumſtance unworthy of poetry, and ridiculous to aſcribe a greater ſagacity to the brute creation, than to man; but it may be anſwered, that it was the deſign of the goddeſs to be inviſible only to Telemachus, and conſequently ſhe was viſible to the dogs. But I am willing to believe that there is a deeper meaning, and a beautiful moral couched under this ſtory: and perhaps Homer ſpeaks thus, to give us to underſtand, that the brute creation itſelf confeſſes the divinity. Dacier.

v. 178. *The goddeſs, beck'ning, waves her deathleſs hands.*] The goddeſs evidently acts thus, that Telemachus might not hear her ſpeak to Ulyſſes; for this would have made the diſcovery, and precluded that beautiful interview between Ulyſſes and Telemachus that immediately follows. It is for the ſame reaſon that ſhe conceals herſelf from Telemachus, for the diſcovery muſt have been fully and convincingly made by the appearance and vivacity of a deity; and then there could have been no room for all thoſe doubts and fears of Telemachus, that enliven and beautify the manner of the diſcovery. The whole relation is indeed an allegory: the wiſdom of Ulyſſes (in poetry, Minerva) ſuggeſts to him, that this is a proper time to reveal himſelf to Telemachus; the ſame wiſdom (or Minerva) inſtructs him to dreſs himſelf like a king, that he may find the readier credit with his ſon: in this dreſs he appears a new man, young and beautiful, which gives occaſion to Telemachus to imagine him a deity; eſpecially becauſe he was an infant when his father ſailed to Troy, and therefore though he now appears like Ulyſſes, Telemachus does not know him to be his father. This is the naked ſtory, when ſtript of its poetical ornaments.

At once with grace divine his frame improves;
At once with majeſty enlarg'd he moves:
Youth fluſh'd his red'ning cheek, and from his brows
A length of hair in ſable ringlets flows;
His black'ning chin receives a deeper ſhade;
Then from his eyes upſprung the warriour-maid.
The hero re-aſcends: the prince o'eraw'd
Scarce lifts his eyes, and bows as to a god.

v. 194. ——— *the prince o'eraw'd*
Scarce lifts his eyes, and bows as to a god.]

I muſt offer a remark in oppoſition to that of Dacier upon this place: "This fear of Telemachus (ſays that author) proceeds from the opinion of the antients when the gods came down viſibly; they thought themſelves ſo unworthy of ſuch a manifeſtation, that whenever it happened, they believed they ſhould die, or meet with ſome great calamity:" thus the Iſraelites addreſs Moſes; "Speak thou to us, and we will hear, but let not the Lord ſpeak to us, leſt we die." Thus alſo Gideon; "Alas! O Lord, my God, becauſe I have ſeen an angel of the Lord face to face; and the Lord ſaid to him, Fear not, thou ſhalt not die." Hence it is very evident, that this notion prevailed amongſt the Iſraelites: but how does it appear that the Greeks held the ſame opinion? The contrary is manifeſt almoſt to a demonſtration: the gods are introduced almoſt in every book both of the Iliad and Odyſſey; and yet there is not the leaſt foundation for ſuch an aſſertion: nay, Telemachus himſelf in the ſecond book returns thanks to Minerva for appearing to him, and prays for a ſecond viſion.

O goddeſs! who deſcending from the ſkies,
Vouchſaf'd thy preſence to my longing eyes;
Hear from thy heav'ns above, O warriour maid,
Deſcend once more propitious to my aid!

It is not to be imagined that Telemachus would have preferred this prayer, if the preſence of the Deity denoted death, or ſome great calamity; and all the heroes throughout the Iliad eſteem ſuch intercourſes as their glory, and converſe with the gods without any apprehenſions. But whence then proceeds this fear of Telemachus? Entirely from a reverential awe and his own modeſty, while he ſtands in the preſence of a deity; for ſuch he believes Ulyſſes. The words of Telemachus agree with his behaviour; he ſpeaks the language of a man in ſurpriſe: it is this ſurpriſe at the ſudden change of Ulyſſes, that firſt makes him imagine him a deity, and upon that imagination

Then with ſurpriſe (ſurpriſe chaſtis'd by fears)
How art thou chang'd! (he cry'd) a god appears!
Far other veſts thy limbs majeſtic grace,
Far other glories lighten from thy face!
If heav'n be thy abode, with pious care
Lo! I the ready ſacrifice prepare:
Lo! gifts of labour'd gold adorn thy ſhrine,
To win thy grace: O ſave us, pow'r divine!
Few are my days, Ulyſſes made reply,
Nor I, alas! deſcendant of the ſky.
I am thy father. O my ſon! my ſon!
That father, for whoſe ſake thy days have run
One ſcene of woe; to endleſs cares conſign'd,
And outrag'd by the wrongs of baſe mankind.
Then ruſhing to his arms, he kiſs'd his boy
With the ſtrong raptures of a parent's joy.
Tears bathe his cheek, and tears the ground bedew:
He ſtrain'd him cloſe, as to his breaſt he grew.
Ah me! (exclaims the prince with fond deſire)
Thou art not — no, thou canſt not be my ſire.
Heav'n ſuch illuſion only can impoſe,
By the falſe joy to aggravate my woes.
Who but a god can change the general doom,
And give to wither'd age a youthful bloom?
Late, worn with years, in weeds obſcene you trod;
Now, cloath'd in majeſty, you move a god!
Forbear, he cry'd; for heav'n reſerve that name,
Give to thy father but a father's claim:
Other Ulyſſes ſhalt thou never ſee,
I am Ulyſſes, I (my ſon) am he.
Twice ten ſad years o'er earth and ocean toſt,
'Tis giv'n at length to view my native coaſt.
Pallas, unconquer'd maid, my frame ſurrounds
With grace divine; her pow'r admits no bounds:

offer him ſacrifice and prayer; the whole behaviour paints the nature of man under ſurpriſe, and which tranſports the ſpeaker into vehemence and emotion.

She o'er my limbs old age and wrinkles ſhed;
Now ſtrong as youth, magnificent I tread.
The gods with eaſe frail man depreſs, or raiſe,
Exalt the lowly, or the proud debaſe.

He ſpoke and ſat. The prince with tranſport flew,
Hung round his neck, while tears his cheek bedew;
Nor leſs the father pour'd a ſocial flood!
They wept abundant, and they wept aloud.
As the bold eagle with fierce ſorrow ſtung,
Or parent vultur, mourns her raviſh'd young;

v. 238. *As the bold eagle* ———] This is a beautiful compariſon; but to take its full force, it is neceſſary to obſerve the nature of this φήνη or vultur: Homer does not compare Ulyſſes to that bird merely for its dignity, it being of the aquiline kind, and therefore the king of birds; but from the knowledge of the nature of it, which doubles the beauty of the alluſion: this bird is remarkable for the love it bears towards its young: "Tearing open her own thigh, ſhe "feeds her young with her own blood:" thus alſo another author;

Τὸν μηρὸν ἐκλέμνουσες, ἡμαλωμένοις
Γάλακτος ὁλκοῖς Ζωπύρουσι τὰ βρέφη.

"Femore exſecto, ſanguineo lactis defluxu ſuos fœtus refocillant." And the Ægyptians made the vultur their hieroglyphic, to repreſent a compaſſionate nature. This gives a reaſon why this bird is introduced with peculiar propriety to repreſent the fondneſs of Ulyſſes for Telemachus. But where is the point of the ſimilitude? Ulyſſes embraces his ſon, but the vultur is ſaid to mourn the loſs of her young: Euſtathius anſwers, that the ſorrow alone, and vehemence of it, is intended to be illuſtrated by the compariſon; I think he ſhould have added the affection Ulyſſes bears to Telemachus.

It is obſervable, that Homer inſerts very few ſimilitudes in his Odyſſey, though they occur frequently in almoſt every book of the Iliad. The Odyſſey is wrote with more ſimplicity, and conſequently there is leſs room for alluſions. If we obſerve the ſimilies themſelves inſerted in each poem, we ſhall find the ſame difference: in the Iliad they are drawn from lions, ſtorms, torrents, conflagrations, thunder, &c. In the Odyſſey, from lower objects, from an heap of thorns, from a ſhipwright plying the wimble, an armourer tempering iron, a matron weeping over her dying huſband, &c. The ſimilies are likewiſe generally longer in the Iliad than the Odyſſey, and leſs reſemblance between the thing illuſtrated, and the illuſtration; the reaſon is, in the Iliad the ſimilitudes are introduced to illuſtrate ſome great and noble object, and therefore the poet proceeds till he has

They cry, they ſcream, their unfledg'd brood a prey
To ſome rude churl, and borne by ſtealth away; 241

raiſed ſome noble image to inflame the mind of the reader; whereas in theſe calmer ſcenes the poet keeps cloſer to the point of alluſion, and needs only to repreſent the object, to render it entertaining: by the former conduct he raiſes our admiration above the ſubject, by adding foreign embelliſhments; in the latter he brings the copy as cloſe as poſſible to the original, to poſſeſs us with a true and equal image of it.

It has been objected by a French critic, that Homer is blameable for too great a length in his ſimilitudes; that in the heat of an action he ſtops ſhort, and turns to ſome alluſion, which calls off our attention from the main ſubject. It is true, compariſons ought not to be too long, and are not to be placed in the heat of an action, as Mr. Dryden obſerves, but when it begins to decline: thus in the firſt Æneis, when the ſtorm is in its fury, the poet introduces no compariſon, becauſe nothing can be more impetuous than the ſtorm itſelf; but when the heat of the deſcription abates, then leſt we ſhould cool too ſoon, he renews it by ſome proper ſimilitude, which ſtill keeps up our attention, and fixes the whole upon our minds. The ſimilitude before us is thus placed at the concluſion of the hero's lamentation, and the poet by this method leaves the whole deeply fixed upon the memory. Virgil has imitated this compariſon in his fourth Georgic, but very judiciouſly ſubſtituted the nightingale in the place of the vultur, that bird being introduced to repreſent the mournful muſic of Orpheus.

" Qualis populeâ mœrens Philomela ſub umbrâ
" Amiſſos queriter fœtus, quos durus arator
" Obſervans nido implumes detraxit: at illa
" Flet noctem, &c."

Nothing can be ſweeter than this compariſon of Virgil, yet the learned Huetius thinks he has found a notorious blunder in it: this nightingale (ſays he) in the firſt line ſits in the ſhade of a poplar, and yet in the fourth ſhe mourns by night, " flet noctem." It is evident that Monſieur Huet miſtakes the word " umbra" for the ſhade of a tree, which it caſts while the ſun ſhines upon it; whereas it only means that the bird ſings " ſub foliis," or concealed in the leaves of it, which may be done by night as well as by day: but if it be thought that this is not a ſufficient anſwer, the paſſage may be thus underſtood: the nightingale mourning under the ſhade of a poplar, &c. ceaſes not all night, or " flet noctem;" that is, ſhe begins her ſong in the evening by day, but mourns all night. Either of theſe anſwers are ſufficient for Virgil's vindication.

So they aloud: and tears in tides had run,
Their grief unfiniſh'd with the ſetting ſun:
But checking the full torrent in its flow,
The prince thus interrupts the ſolemn woe.
What ſhip tranſported thee, O father ſay,
And what bleſt hands have oar'd thee on the way?
All, all (Ulyſſes inſtant made reply)
I tell thee all, my child, my only joy!
Phæacians bore me to the port aſſign'd,
A nation ever to the ſtranger kind;
Wrapt in th' embrace of ſleep, the faithful train
O'er ſeas convey'd me to my native reign:
Embroider'd veſtures, gold, and braſs are laid
Conceal'd in caverns in the ſilvan ſhade.
Hither, intent the rival rout to ſlay
And plan the ſcene of death, I bend my way:
So Pallas wills ——— but thou, my ſon, explain
The names, and numbers of th' audacious train;

v. 245. *The prince thus interrupts the ſolemn woe.*] It does not appear at firſt view why the poet makes Telemachus recover himſelf from his tranſport of ſorrow ſooner than Ulyſſes: is Telemachus a greater maſter of his paſſions? or is it to convince Ulyſſes of his ſon's wiſdom, as Euſtathius conjectures? This can ſcarce be ſuppoſed, Ulyſſes being ſuperiour in wiſdom. I would chuſe rather to aſcribe it to human nature; for it has been obſerved, that affection ſeldom ſo ſtrongly aſcends, as it deſcends; the child ſeldom loves the father ſo tenderly, as the father the child: this obſervation has been made from the remoteſt antiquity. And it is wiſely deſigned by the great Author of our natures; for in the common courſe of life, the child muſt bury the parent; it is therefore a merciful diſpenſation, that the tie of blood and affection ſhouſd be looſened by degrees, and not torn violently aſunder in the full ſtrength of it. It is expected that aged perſons ſhould die, their loſs therefore grows more familiar to us, and it loſes much of its horrour through the long expectation of it.

v. 250. *Phæacians bore me to the port aſſign'd.*] Here is a repetition of what the reader knows entirely, from many parts of the preceding ſtory; but it being neceſſary in this place, the poet judiciouſly reduces it into the compaſs of ſix lines, and by this method avoids proſlixity. Euſtathius.

'Tis mine to judge if better to employ
Aſſiſtant force, or ſingly to deſtroy.
O'er earth (returns the prince) reſounds thy name,
Thy well-try'd wiſdom, and thy martial fame,
Yet at thy words I ſtart, in wonder loſt;
Can we engage, not decads, but an hoſt?
Can we alone in furious battle ſtand,
Againſt that num'rous, and determin'd band?
Hear then their numbers: from Dulichium came
Twice twenty-ſix, all peers of mighty name,
Six are their menial train: twice twelve the boaſt
Of Samos; twenty from Zacynthus coaſt:
And twelve our country's pride; to theſe belong
Medon and Phemius ſkill'd in heav'nly ſong.
Two ſew'rs from day to day the revels wait,
Exact of taſte, and ſerve the feaſt in ſtate.
With ſuch a foe th' unequal fight to try,
Were by falſe courage unreveng'd to die.
Then what aſſiſtant pow'rs you boaſt, relate,
Ere yet we mingle in the ſtern debate.
Mark well my voice, Ulyſſes ſtraight replies:
What need of aids, if favour'd by the ſkies?

v. 268. *Hear then their numbers: ——*] According to this catalogue, the ſuitors with the attendants (the two ſewers, and Medon, and Phemius) are a hundred and eighteen; but the two laſt are not to be taken for the enemies of Ulyſſes; and therefore are not involved in their puniſhment in the concluſion of the Odyſſey. Euſtathius.

Spondanus miſtakes this paſſage egregiouſly.

Μέδων κῆρυξ καὶ θεῖος ἀοιδός.

He underſtands it thus, "Medon who was a herald and a divine bard." "Præco unus qui et idem muſicus:" it is true, the conſtruction will bear this interpretation; but it is evident from the latter part of the twenty-ſecond Odyſſey, that the Κῆρυξ and the Ἀοιδὸς were two perſons, namely, Medon and Phemius: Medon acts all along as a friend to Penelope and Telemachus, and Phemius is affirmed to be detained by the ſuitors involuntarily, and conſequently they are both guiltleſs.

If ſhielded to the dreadful fight we move,
By mighty Pallas, and by thund'ring Jove.
Sufficient they (Telemachus rejoin'd)
Againſt the banded pow'rs of all mankind :
They, high enthron'd above the rolling clouds,
Wither the ſtrength of man, and awe the gods.
Such aids expect, he cries, when ſtrong in might
We riſe terrific to the taſk of fight.

v. 288. *Such aids expect, he cries, when ſtrong in might,*
We riſe terrific to the taſk of fight.]

This whole diſcourſe between Ulyſſes and Telemachus is introduced to prepare the reader for the cataſtrophe of the poem : Homer judiciouſly intereſts heaven in the cauſe, that the reader may not be ſurpriſed at the event, when he ſees ſuch numbers fall by the hands of theſe heroes ; he conſults probability, and as the poem now draws to a concluſion, ſets the aſſiſtance of heaven full before the reader.

It is likewiſe very artful to let us into ſome knowledge of the event of the poem ; all care muſt be taken that it be rather gueſſed than known. If it be entirely known, the reader finds nothing new to awaken his attention ; if on the contrary it be ſo intricate, that the event cannot poſſibly be gueſſed at, we wander in the dark, and are loſt in uncertainty. The art of the poet conſiſts not in concealing the event intirely : but when it is in ſome meaſure foreſeen, in introducing ſuch a number of incidents that now bring us almoſt into the ſight of it, then by new obſtacles perplex the ſtory to the very concluſion of the poem ; every obſtacle, and every removal of it fills us with ſurpriſe, with pleaſure or pain alternately, and conſequently calls up our whole attention. This is admirably deſcribed by Vida, lib. ii.

" ——Eventus nonnullis ſæpe canendo
" Indiciis porrò oſtendunt, in luce malignâ
" Subluſtrique ; aliquid dant cernere noctis in umbrâ."

Th' event ſhould glimmer with a dubious ray,
Not hid in clouds nor glare in open day.

This rule he afterwards illuſtrates by a very happy ſimilitude,

" Haud aliter longinqua petit qui forte viator
" Mænia, ſi poſitas altis in collibus arces
" Nunc etiam dubias oculis videt, incipit ultro
" Lætior ire viam, placidumque urgere laborem,
" Quàm cùm nuſquam ullæ cernuntur quas adit arces,
" Obſcurum ſed iter tendit convallibus imis."

But thou, when morn ſalutes th' aerial plain,
The court reviſit and the lawleſs train:
Me thither in diſguiſe Eumæus leads,
An aged mendicant in tatter'd weeds.
There, if baſe ſcorn inſult my rev'rend age;
Bear it, my ſon! repreſs thy riſing rage.
If outrag'd, ceaſe that outrage to repel;
Bear it, my ſon! howe'er thy heart rebel.

The conduct both of Virgil and Homer are agreeable to this obſervation; for inſtance, Anchiſes and Tireſias in the ſhades, foretell Æneas and Ulyſſes that all their troubles ſhall end proſperouſly, that the one ſhall found the Roman empire, the other regain his kingdoms; but the means being kept concealed, our appetite is rather whetted than cloyed, to know by what means theſe events are brought about: thus, as in Vida's alluſion, they ſhew us the city at a great diſtance, but how we are to arrive at it, by what roads they intend to guide us to it, this they keep concealed; the journey diſcovers itſelf, and every ſtep we advance leads us forward, and ſhews where we are to take the next: neither does the poet directly lead us in the ſtraight path: ſometimes we are as it were in a labyrinth, and we know not how to extricate ourſelves out of it; ſometimes he carries us into bye-ways, and we almoſt loſe ſight of the direct way, and then ſuddenly they open into the chief road, and convey us to the journey's end. In this conſiſts the ſkill of the poet; he muſt form probable intricacies, and then ſolve them probably; he muſt ſet his hero in dangers, and then bring him out of them with honour. This obſervation is neceſſary to be applied to all thoſe paſſages in the Odyſſey, where the event of it is obſcurely foretold, and which ſome taſteleſs critics have blamed, as taking away the curioſity of the reader by an unſeaſonable diſcovery.

v. 296. *If outrag'd, ceaſe that outrage to repel,*
Bear it, my ſon! howe'er thy heart rebel.]

Plutarch in his Treatiſe upon reading Poems, obſerves the wiſdom of Ulyſſes in theſe inſtructions: he is the perſon who is more immediately injured, yet he not only reſtrains his own reſentment, but that of Telemachus: he perceives that his ſon is in danger of flying out into ſome paſſion, he therefore very wiſely arms him againſt it. Men do not put bridles upon horſes when they are already running with full ſpeed, but they bridle them before they bring them out to the race: this very well illuſtrates the conduct of Ulyſſes; he fears the youth of Telemachus may be too warm, and through an unſeaſonable ardour at the ſight of his wrongs, betray him to his enemies; he therefore perſuades him to patience

Yet ſtrive by pray'r and counſel to reſtrain
Their lawleſs inſults, tho' thou ſtrive in vain:
For wicked ears are deaf to wiſdom's call,
And vengeance ſtrikes whom heav'n has doom'd to fall.
Once more attend: when ſhe * whoſe pow'r inſpires
The thinking mind, my ſoul to vengeance fires;
I give the ſign: that inſtant, from beneath,
Aloft convey the inſtruments of death,
Armour and arms; and if miſtruſt ariſe,
Thus veil the truth in plauſible diſguiſe.
" Theſe glitt'ring weapons, ere he ſail'd to Troy,
" Ulyſſes view'd with ſtern heroic joy:
" Then, beaming o'er th' illumin'd wall they ſhone:
" Now duſt diſhonours, all their luſtre gone.
" I bear them hence (ſo Jove my ſoul inſpires)
" From the pollution of the fuming fires;
" Leſt when the bowl inflames, in vengeful mood
" Ye ruſh to arms, and ſtain the feaſt with blood;
" Oft' ready ſwords in luckleſs hour incite
" The hand of wrath, and arm it for the fight."

and calmneſs, and prediſpoſes his mind with rational conſiderations to enable him to encounter his paſſions, and govern his reſentment.

* Minerva.

v. 304. —— *that inſtant, from beneath,*
Aloft convey the inſtruments of death.]

Theſe ten lines occur in the beginning of the nineteenth book, and the antients (as Euſtathius informs us) were of opinion, that they are here placed improperly; for how, ſay they, ſhould Ulyſſes know that the arms were in a lower apartment, when he was in the country, and had not yet ſeen his palace? But this is no real objection; his repoſitory of arms he knew was in the lower apartment, and therefore it was rational to conclude that the arms were in it. The verſes are proper in both places; here Ulyſſes prepares Telemachus againſt the time of the execution of his deſigns; in the nineteenth book that time is come, and therefore he repeats his inſtructions.

v. 316. *Oft' ready ſwords in luckleſs hour incite*
The hand of wrath, and arm it for the fight.]

Such be the plea, and by the plea deceive:
For Jove infatuates all, and all believe.
Yet leave for each of us a ſword to wield,
A pointed jav'lin, and a fenceful ſhield.
But by my blood that in thy boſom glows,
By that regard a ſon his father owes;
The ſecret, that thy father lives, retain
Lock'd in thy boſom from the houſhold train;
Hide it from all; ev'n from Eumæus hide,
From my dear father, and my dearer bride.
One care remains, to note the loyal few
Whoſe faith yet laſts among the menial crew;
And noting, ere we riſe in vengeance, prove
Who loves his prince; for ſure you merit love.
To whom the youth: to emulate I aim
The brave and wiſe, and my great father's fame.
But re-conſider, ſince the wiſeſt err,
Veng'ance reſolv'd, 'tis dang'rous to defer.

This ſeems to have been a proverbial expreſſion, at leaſt it has been ſo uſed by latter writers: the obſervation holds true to this day, and it is manifeſt that more men fall by the ſword in countries where the inhabitants daily wear ſwords, than in thoſe where a ſword is thought no part of dreſs or ornament. Dacier.

v. 324. *The ſecret, that thy father lives, retain*
Lock'd in thy boſom. ——]

This injunction of ſecrecy is introduced by Ulyſſes with the utmoſt ſolemnity; and it was very neceſſary that it ſhould be ſo; the whole hopes of his re-eſtabliſhment depending upon it: beſides, this behaviour agrees with the character of Ulyſſes, which is remarkable for diſguiſe and concealment. The poet makes a further uſe of it; namely, to give him an opportunity to deſcribe at large the ſeveral diſcoveries made to Penelope, Laertes, and Eumæus perſonally by Ulyſſes, in the ſequel of the Odyſſey, which are no ſmall ornaments to it; yet muſt have been omitted, or have loſt their effect, if the return of Ulyſſes had been made known by Telemachus; this would have been like diſcovering the plot before the beginning of the play. At the ſame time this direction is an excellent rule to be obſerved in management of all weighty affairs, the ſucceſs of which chiefly depends upon ſecrecy.

v. 334. *But re-conſider*———] The poet here deſcribes Telemachus rectifying the judgment of Ulyſſes; is this any diſparage-

What length of time muſt we conſume in vain,
Too curious to explore the menial train?
While the proud foes induſtrious to deſtroy
Thy wealth in riot, the delay enjoy.
Suffice it in this exigence alone
To mark the damſels that attend the throne:
Diſpers'd the youth reſides; their faith to prove
Jove grants henceforth, if thou haſt ſpoke from Jove.
While in debate they waſte the hours away,
Th' aſſociates of the prince repaſs'd the bay;

ment to that hero? It is not; but an exact repereſentation of human nature; for the wiſeſt men may receive, in particular caſes, inſtructions from men leſs wiſe; and the eye of the underſtanding in a young man, may ſometimes ſee further than that of age; that is, in the language of the poet, a wiſe and mature Ulyſſes may ſometimes be inſtructed by a young and unexperienced Telemachus.

v. 343. ——*if thou haſt ſpoke from Jove.*] The expreſſion in the Greek is obſcure, and it may be aſked, to what refers Διὸς τέρας? Dacier renders it, "S'il vray que vous ayez vû un prodige:" or if "it be true that you have ſeen a prodigy:" now there is no mention of any prodigy ſeen by Ulyſſes in all this interview, and this occaſions the obſcurity; but it is implied, for Ulyſſes directly promiſes the aſſiſtance of Jupiter; and how could he depend upon it, but by ſome prodigy from Jupiter? Euſtathius thus underſtands the words: Τέρας, ἐξ ὃ ὁρμώμενος ἔφης ἀμύνεσθαι τὸν Διὰ ἡμῖν ἔσεσθαι. And then the meaning will be, "If the prodigy from Jupiter be evident, there "is no occaſion to concern ourſelves about the houſhold train." But then does not that expreſſion imply doubt, and a jealouſy, that Ulyſſes might poſſibly depend too much upon ſupernatural aſſiſtance? It only inſinuates, that he ought to be certain in the interpretation of the prodigy, but Telemachus refers himſelf intirely to Ulyſſes, and acquieſces in his judgment.

v. 345. *Th' aſſociates of the prince repaſs'd the bay.*] It is manifeſt that this veſſel had ſpent the evening of the preceding day, the whole night and part of the next morning, in ſailing from the place where Telemachus embarked: for it is neceſſary to remember that Telemachus, to avoid the ſuitors, had been obliged to fetch a large compaſs, and land upon the northern coaſt of Ithaca; and conſequently the veſſel was neceſſitated to double the whole iſle on the weſtern ſide to reach the Ithacan bay. This is the reaſon that it arrives not till the day afterwards, and that the herald diſpatched by the aſſociates of Telemachus, and Eumæus from the country, meet upon the road, as they go to carry the news of the return of Telemachus

With ſpeed they guide the veſſel to the ſhores;
With ſpeed debarking land the naval ſtores;
Then faithful to their charge, to Clytius bear,
And truſt the preſents to his friendly care.
Swift to the queen a herald flies t' impart
Her ſon's return, and eaſe a parent's heart;
Leſt a ſad prey to ever-muſing cares,
Pale grief deſtroy what time a while forbears.
Th' uncautious herald with impatience burns,
And cries aloud; Thy ſon, oh queen, returns:
Eumæus ſage approach'd th' imperial throne,
And breath'd his mandate to her ear alone,
Then meaſur'd back the way—The ſuitor band
Stung to the ſoul, abaſh'd, confounded ſtand;
And iſſuing from the dome, before the gate,
With clouded looks, a pale aſſembly ſat.
At length Eurymachus. Our hopes are vain
Telemachus in triumph ſails the main.

to Penelope. It is likewiſe evident that the lodge of Eumæus was not far diſtant from the palace; for he ſets out toward the city after eating in the morning, and paſſing ſome time in conference with Telemachus, delivers his meſſage, and returns in the evening of the ſame day.

v. 355. *And cries aloud; Thy ſon, oh queen, returns.*] This little circumſtance diſtinguiſhes characters, and gives variety to poetry: it is a kind of painting, which always varies its figures by ſome particular ornament, or attitude, ſo as no two figures are alike: the contrary conduct would make an equal confuſion both in poetry and painting, and an indiſtinction of perſons and characters. I will not promiſe that theſe particularities are of equal beauty as neceſſity, eſpecially in modern languages; the Greek is always flowing, ſonorous and harmonious; the language, like leaves, oftentimes conceals barrenneſs, and a want of fruit, and renders the ſenſe at leaſt beautiful, if not profitable; this is wanted in ſome degree in Engliſh poetry, where it is not always in our power to conceal the nakedneſs with ornaments: this particularity before us is of abſolute neceſſity, and could not well be avoided; the indiſcretion of the herald in ſpeaking aloud, diſcovers the return of Telemachus to the ſuitors, and is the incident that brings about their following debates, and furniſhes out the entertainment of the ſucceeding part of this book.

Haſte, rear the maſt, the ſwelling ſhroud diſplay;
Haſte, to our ambuſh'd friends the news convey!
  Scarce had he ſpoke, when turning to the ſtrand,
Amphinomus ſurvey'd th' aſſociate band;
Full to the bay within the winding ſhores
With gather'd ſails they ſtood, and lifted oars.
O friends! he cry'd, elate with riſing joy,
See to the port ſecure the veſſel fly!
Some god has told them, or themſelves ſurvey
The bark eſcap'd; and meaſure back their way.
  Swift at the word deſcending to the ſhores,
They moor the veſſel and unlade the ſtores:
Then moving from the ſtrand, apart they ſat,
And full and frequent, form'd a dire debate.
  Lives then the boy? he lives (Antinous cries)
The care of gods and fav'rite of the ſkies.
All night we watch'd, till with her orient wheels
Aurora flam'd above the eaſtern hills,
And from the lofty brow of rocks by day
Took in the ocean with a broad ſurvey:
Yet ſafe he ſails! the pow'rs cœleſtial give
To ſhun the hidden ſnares of death, and live.
But die he ſhall, and thus condemn'd to bleed,
Be now the ſcene of inſtant death decreed:
Hope ye ſucceſs? undaunted cruſh the foe.
Is he not wiſe? know this, and ſtrike the blow.
Wait ye, till he to arms in council draws
The Greeks, averſe too juſtly to our cauſe?

v. 391. *The Greeks averſe, too juſtly to our cauſe.*] This verſe is inſerted with great judgment, and gives an air of probability to the whole relation; for if it be aſked why the ſuitors defer to ſeize the ſupreme power, and to murder Telemachus, they being ſo ſuperior in number? Antinous himſelf anſwers, that they fear the people, who favour the cauſe of Telemachus, and would revenge his injuries: it is for this reaſon that they formed the ambuſh by ſea; and for this reaſon Antinous propoſes to intercept him in his return from the country: they dare not offer open violence, and therefore make

Strike, ere the ſtates conven'd, the foe betray
Our murd'rous ambuſh on the wat'ry way.
Or chuſe ye vagrant from their rage to fly
Outcaſts of earth, to breathe an unknown ſky?
The brave prevent misfortune; then be brave,
And bury future danger in his grave.
Returns he? ambuſh'd we'll his walk invade,
Or where he hides in ſolitude and ſhade:
And give the palace to the queen a dow'r,
Or him ſhe bleſſes in the bridal hour.
But if ſubmiſſive you reſign the ſway,
Slaves to a boy; go flatter and obey.

uſe of treachery. This ſpeech of Antinous forms a ſhort under-plot to the poem; it gives us pain (ſays Euſtathius) for Telemachus, and holds us in ſuſpenſe till the intricacy is unravelled by Amphinomus.

The whole harangue is admirable in Homer: the diction is excellently ſuited to the temper of Antinous, who ſpeaks with precipitation: his mind is in agitation and diſorder, and conſequently his language is abrupt, and not allowing himſelf time to explain his thoughts at full length, he falls into ellipſes and abbreviations. For inſtance, he is to ſpeak againſt Telemachus, but his contempt and reſentment will not permit him to mention his name, he therefore calls him τὸν ἄνδρα; thus in μήτι κακὸν ῥέζωσι, δέδοικα is underſtood; thus likewiſe in this verſe,

Ἀλλ' ἄγεῖε πρὶν κεῖνον ὁμηγυρίσασθαι Ἀχαιοὺς
Εἰς ἀγορήν———

the word ὀλοθρεύσωμεν, or ἀνέλωμεν, muſt be underſtood, to make the ſenſe intelligible. Thus alſo after εἰ δ' ὑμῖν ὧδε μῦθος ἀφανδάνει, to make Ἀλλὰ in the next ſentence begin it ſignificantly, we muſt ſupply καὶ ἐ δοκεῖ καλὸν ὁ φόνος; then the ſenſe is complete; "If this opinion diſpleaſe, and his death appear not honourable," but you would have him live, &c. otherwiſe ἀλλὰ βάλεσθε muſt be conſtrued like βάλεσθε δὲ; and laſtly, to image the diſorder of Antinous more ſtrongly, Homer inſerts a falſe quantity, by making the firſt ſyllable in βάλεσθε ſhort. Antinous attends not, through the violence of his ſpirit, to the words he utters, and therefore falls into this errour, which excellently repreſents it. It is impoſſible to retain theſe ellipſes in the tranſlation, but I have endeavoured to ſhew the warmth of the ſpeaker, by putting the words into interrogations, which are always uttered with vehemence, and ſigns of hurry and precipitation.

Retire we inſtant to our native reign,
Nor be the wealth of kings conſum'd in vain ;
Then wed whom choice approves: the queen be giv'n
To ſome bleſt prince, the prince decreed by heav'n.
Abaſh'd, the ſuitor train his voice attends ;
'Till from his throne Amphinomus deſcends,
Who o'er Dulichium ſtretch'd his ſpacious reign,
A land of plenty, bleſt with ev'ry grain :
Chief of the numbers who the queen addreſt,
And tho' diſpleaſing, yet diſpleaſing leaſt.
Soft were his words ; his actions wiſdom ſway'd ;
Graceful a while he paus'd, then mildly ſaid.
O friends forbear ! and be the thought withſtood :
'Tis horrible to ſhed imperial blood !
Conſult we firſt th' all-ſeeing pow'rs above,
And the ſure oracles of righteous Jove.

v. 413. *And tho' diſpleaſing, yet diſpleaſing leaſt.*] We are not to gather from this expreſſion, that Penelope had any particular tenderneſs for Amphinomus, but it means only that he was a perſon of ſome juſtice and moderation. At firſt view, there ſeems no reaſon why the poet ſhould diſtinguiſh Amphinomus from the reſt of the ſuitors, by giving him this humane character; but in reality there is an abſolute neceſſity for it. Telemachus is doomed to die by Antinous: here is an intricacy formed, and how is that hero to be preſerved with probability ? The poet aſcribes a greater degree of tenderneſs and moderation to one of the ſuitors, and by this method preſerves Telemachus. Thus we ſee the leaſt circumſtance in Homer has its uſe and effect ; the art of a good painter is viſible in the ſmalleſt ſketch, as well as in the largeſt draught.

v. 419. *And the ſure oracles of righteous Jove.*] Strabo, lib. vii. quotes this verſe of Homer, and tells us that ſome critics thus read it,

Εἴ μὲν κ' αἰνήσωσι Διὸς μεγάλοιο τομῦροι.

preferring τομῦροι to θέμιστες ; for, add they, θέμιστες no where in Homer ſignifies oracles, but conſtantly laws or councils. Tmarus or Tomarus was a mountain on which the oracle of Jupiter ſtood, and in proceſs of time it was uſed to denote the oracles themſelves. Τόμυρος is formed like the word οἰκυρὸς, the former ſignifies " cuſtos Tmari," the latter " cuſtos domûs : in this ſenſe Amphinomus adviſes to conſult the Dodonian oracles, which were given from the mountain Tmarus : but, adds Strabo, Homer is to be underſtood more plainly ;

If they aſſent, ev'n by this hand he dies;
If they forbid, I war not with the ſkies.
He ſaid: the rival train his voice approv'd,
And riſing inſtant to the palace mov'd.
Arriv'd with wild tumultuous noiſe they ſat,
Recumbent on the ſhining thrones of ſtate.
Then Medon, conſcious of their dire debates,
The murd'rous council to the queen relates.

and by θέμιστες, the councils, the will and deciſions of the oracles are implied, for thoſe deciſions were held as laws; thus βουλὴ, as well as θέμιστες, ſignifies the Dodonian oracles.

Ἐκδρυὸς ὑψικόμοιο Διὸς βουλὴν ἐπάκουσαι.

Neither is it true (obſerves the ſcholiaſt upon Strabo) that θέμιστες never ſignifies oracles in Homer: for in the hymn to Apollo, (and Thucydides quotes that hymn as Homer's) the poet thus uſes it,

——— ἀγγέλλουσι θέμιστας
Φοίβου Ἀπόλλωνος ———

Strabo himſelf uſes θεμιστείαν in this ſenſe, lib. xvii. and in the oracles that are yet extant, θεμιστεύειν frequently ſignifies "oracula red-"dere:" and in Ælian (continues the ſcholiaſt) lib. iii. chap. 43. 44. ὑ σὲ θεμιστεύσω, ſignifies "non tibi oracula reddam;" and Heſychius renders θέμιστες, by μαντεῖα, χρήσμοι, prophecy or oracles.

v. 426. ——*Medon, conſcious of their dire debates.*] After this verſe Euſtathius recites one that is omitted in moſt of the late editions as ſpurious, at leaſt improper.

Αὐλῆς ἐκτὸς ἐὼν, οἱ δ' ἔνδοθε μῆτιν ὕφαινον.

That is, Medon was out of the court, whereas the ſuitors formed their council within it: the line is really to be ſuſpected; for a little above Homer directly tells us, that the ſuitors left the palace.

Then iſſuing from the dome, before the gate,
With clouded looks, a pale aſſembly ſat.

It is likewiſe very evident that they ſtood in the open air, for they diſcover the ſhip returning from the ambuſh, and ſailing into the bay. How then can it be ſaid of the ſuitors, that they formed their aſſembly in the court, οἱ δ' ἔνδοθε μῆτιν ὕφαινον. Beſides, continues Dacier, they left the palace, and placed themſelves under the lofty wall of it.

Touch'd at the dreadful ſtory ſhe deſcends:
Her haſty ſteps a damſel-train attends.
Full where the dome its ſhining valves expands,
Sudden before the rival pow'rs ſhe ſtands:
And veiling decent with a modeſt ſhade
Her cheek, indignant to Antinous ſaid:
O void of faith! of all bad men the worſt!
Renown'd for wiſdom, by th' abuſe accurs'd!
Miſtaking fame proclaims thy gen'rous mind!
Thy deeds denote thee of the baſeſt kind.
Wretch! to deſtroy a prince that friendſhip gives,
While in his gueſt his murd'rer he receives:
Nor dread ſuperiour Jove, to whom belong
The cauſe of ſuppliants, and revenge of wrong.
Haſt thou forgot (ingrateful as thou art)
Who ſav'd thy father with a friendly part?
Lawleſs he ravag'd with his martial pow'rs
The Taphian pirates on Theſprotia's ſhores;
Enrag'd, his life, his treaſures they demand;
Ulyſſes ſav'd him from th' avenger's hand.

Ἐκ δ' ἦλθον μεγάροιο, παρὲκ μέγα τειχίον αὐλῆς.

How then is it poſſible to ſee the ſhip entering the port, when this wall muſt neceſſarily obſtruct the ſight: the two verſes therefore evidently contradict themſelves, and one of them muſt conſequently be rejected: ſhe would have the line read thus:

Αὐλῆς ἐνθὸς ἔων, οἱ δ' ἔκτοθε, &c.

but all the difficulty vaniſhes by taking Αὐλὴ, as it is frequently uſed, to denote any place open to the air, and conſequently not the court, but the court-yard, and this is the proper ſignification of the word. Then Medon may ſtand on the outſide of the wall of the court-yard, Αὐλῆς ἐκτὸς, and over-hear the debates of the ſuitors who form their council within it, or ἔνδοθε μῆτιν ὑφαίνον. And as for the wall intercepting the view of the ſuitors, this is merely conjecture: and it is more rational to imagine that the court-yard was open ſea-ward, that ſo beautiful a proſpect as the ocean might not be ſhut up from the palace of a king; or at leaſt, the palace might ſtand upon ſuch an eminence as to command the ocean.

v. 447. ——— *from th' avenger's hand*] This whole paſſage is thus underſtood by Euſtathius: by δηεῖον ὑποδδείσας Homer means

And would'ſt thou evil for his good repay?
His bed diſhonour, and his houſe betray?
Afflict his queen? and with a murd'rous hand
Deſtroy his heir?—but ceaſe, 'tis I command.
Far hence thoſe fears (Eurymachus reply'd)
O prudent princeſs! bid thy ſoul confide.

the Ithacans; and he likewiſe affirms that the people who demanded vengeance of Ulyſſes were alſo the Ithacans. It is not here tranſlated in this ſenſe, the conſtruction rather requires it to be underſtood of the Theſprotians, who were allies of Ulyſſes, and by virtue of that alliance demanded Eupithes, the father of Antinous, out of the hands of Ulyſſes. But I ſubmit to the reader's judgment.

v. 449. *His bed diſhonour, and his houſe betray?*
Afflict his queen? &c.]

It is obſervable, that Penelope in the compaſs of two lines recites four heads of her complaint; ſuch contractions of thought and expreſſion being natural to perſons in anger, as Euſtathius obſerves; ſhe ſpeaks with heat, and conſequently ſtarts from thought to thought with precipitation. The whole ſpeech is animated with a generous reſentment, and ſhe concludes at once like a mother and a queen; like a mother, with affection for Telemachus; and like a queen, with authority, *παύεσθαι κέλευαι.*

v. 452. ——— *(Eurymachus repl'd.)*] This whole diſcourſe of Eurymachus is to be underſtood by way of contrariety: there is an obvious and a latent interpretation; for inſtance, when he ſays,

His blood in vengeance ſmokes upon my ſpear:

it obviouſly means the blood of the perſon who offers violence to Telemachus; but it may likewiſe mean the blood of Telemachus, and the conſtruction admits both interpretations: thus alſo when he ſays, that no perſon ſhall lay hands upon Telemachus, while he is alive, he means that he will do it himſelf: and laſtly, when he adds,

Then fear no mortal arm; if heav'n deſtroy,
We muſt reſign; for man is born to die.

The apparent ſignification is, that Telemachus has occaſion only to fear a natural death; but he means if the oracle of Jupiter commands them to deſtroy Telemachus, that then the ſuitors will take away his life. He alludes to the foregoing ſpeech of Amphinomus:

Breathes there a man who dares that hero ſlay,
While I behold the golden light of day?
No: by the righteous pow'rs of heav'n I ſwear,
His blood in vengeance ſmokes upon my ſpear.
Ulyſſes, when my infant days I led,
With wine ſuffic'd me, and with dainties fed:
My gen'rous ſoul abhors th' ungrateful part,
And my friend's ſon lives deareſt to my heart.
Then fear no mortal arm: if heav'n deſtroy,
We muſt reſign: for man is born to die.
Thus ſmooth he ended, yet his death conſpir'd:
Then ſorrowing, with ſad ſtep the queen retir'd,
With ſtreaming eyes all comfortleſs deplor'd,
Touch'd with the dear remembrance of her lord;
Nor ceas'd, 'till Pallas bid her ſorrows fly,
And in ſoft ſlumber ſeal'd her flowing eye.
And now Eumæus, at the ev'ning hour,
Came late returning to his ſilvan bow'r.
Ulyſſes and his ſon had dreſt with art
A yearling boar, and gave the gods their part,
Holy repaſt! That inſtant from the ſkies
The martial goddeſs to Ulyſſes flies:
She waves her golden wand, and reaſſumes
From ev'ry feature ev'ry grace that blooms;
At once his veſtures change; at once ſhe ſheds
Age o'er his limbs, that tremble as he treads.
Leſt to the queen the ſwain with tranſport fly,
Unable to contain th' unruly joy.
When near he drew, the prince breaks forth; proclaim
What tidings, friends? what ſpeaks the voice of fame?
Say, if the ſuitors meaſure back the main
Or ſtill in ambuſh thirſt for blood in vain?

Conſult we firſt th' all-ſeeing pow'rs above,
And the ſure oracles of righteous Jove.
If they aſſent, ev'n by this hand he dies;
If they forbid, I war not with the ſkies. Euſtathius.

Whether, he cries, they meaſure back the flood,
Or ſtill in ambuſh thirſt in vain for blood,
Eſcap'd my care: where lawleſs ſuitors ſway,
Thy mandate borne, my ſoul diſdain'd to ſtay.
But from th' Hermæan height I caſt a view,
Where to the port a bark high bounding flew;

v. 490. —— *from th' Hermæan height* ——] It would be ſuperfluous to tranſlate all the various interpretations of this paſſage; it will be ſufficiently intelligible to the reader, if he looks upon it only to imply that there was an hill in Ithaca called the Hermæan hill, either becauſe there was a temple, ſtatue, or altar of Mercury upon it; and ſo called from that deity.

It has been written that Mercury being the meſſenger of the gods, in his frequent journies cleared the roads, and when he found any ſtones he threw them in an heap out of the way and theſe heaps were called ἑρμαῖοι, or Mercuries. The circumſtance of his clearing the roads is ſomewhat odd; but why might not Mercury as well as Trivia preſide over them, and have his images erected in public ways, becauſe he was ſuppoſed to frequent them as the meſſenger of the gods?

This book takes up no more time than the ſpace of the thirty-eighth day; for Telemachus reaches the lodge of Eumæus in the morning, a little after he diſpatches Eumæus to Penelope, who returns in the evening of the ſame day. The book in general is very beautiful in the original; the diſcovery of Ulyſſes to Telemachus is particularly tender and affecting: it has ſome reſemblance with that of Joſeph's diſcovery of himſelf to his brethren, and it may not perhaps be diſagreeable to ſee how two ſuch authors deſcribe the ſame paſſion,

"I am Joſeph, I am your brother Joſeph."
"I am Ulyſſes, I, my ſon! am he!"

"And he wept aloud, and he fell on his brother's neck and wept."
"He wept abundant, and he wept aloud."

But it muſt be owned that Homer falls infinitely ſhort of Moſes: he muſt be a very wicked man, that can read the hiſtory of Joſeph without the utmoſt touches of compaſſion and tranſport. There is a majeſtic ſimplicity in the whole relation, and ſuch an affecting portrait of human nature, that it overwhelms us with viciſſitudes of joy and ſorrow. This is a pregnant inſtance how much the beſt of heathen writers is inferiour to the divine hiſtorian upon a parallel ſubject, where the two authors endeavour to move the ſofter paſſions. The ſame may with equal truth be ſaid

Her freight a ſhining band: with martial air
Each pois'd his ſhield, and each advanc'd his ſpear:
And if aright theſe ſearching eyes ſurvey,
Th' eluded ſuitors ſtem the wat'ry way.
The prince, well pleas'd to diſappoint their wiles,
Steals on his ſire a glance, and ſecret ſmiles.
And now a ſhort repaſt prepar'd, they fed,
'Till the keen rage of craving hunger fled:
Then to repoſe withdrawn, apart they lay,
And in ſoft ſleep forgot the cares of day.

in reſpect to ſublimity; not only in the inſtance produced by Longinus, viz. "Let there be light, and there was light. Let the earth be "made, and the earth was made:" but in general, in the more elevated parts of ſcripture, and particularly the whole book of Job; which, with regard both to ſublimity of thought, and morality, exceeds beyond all compariſon the moſt noble parts of Homer.

THE END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

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